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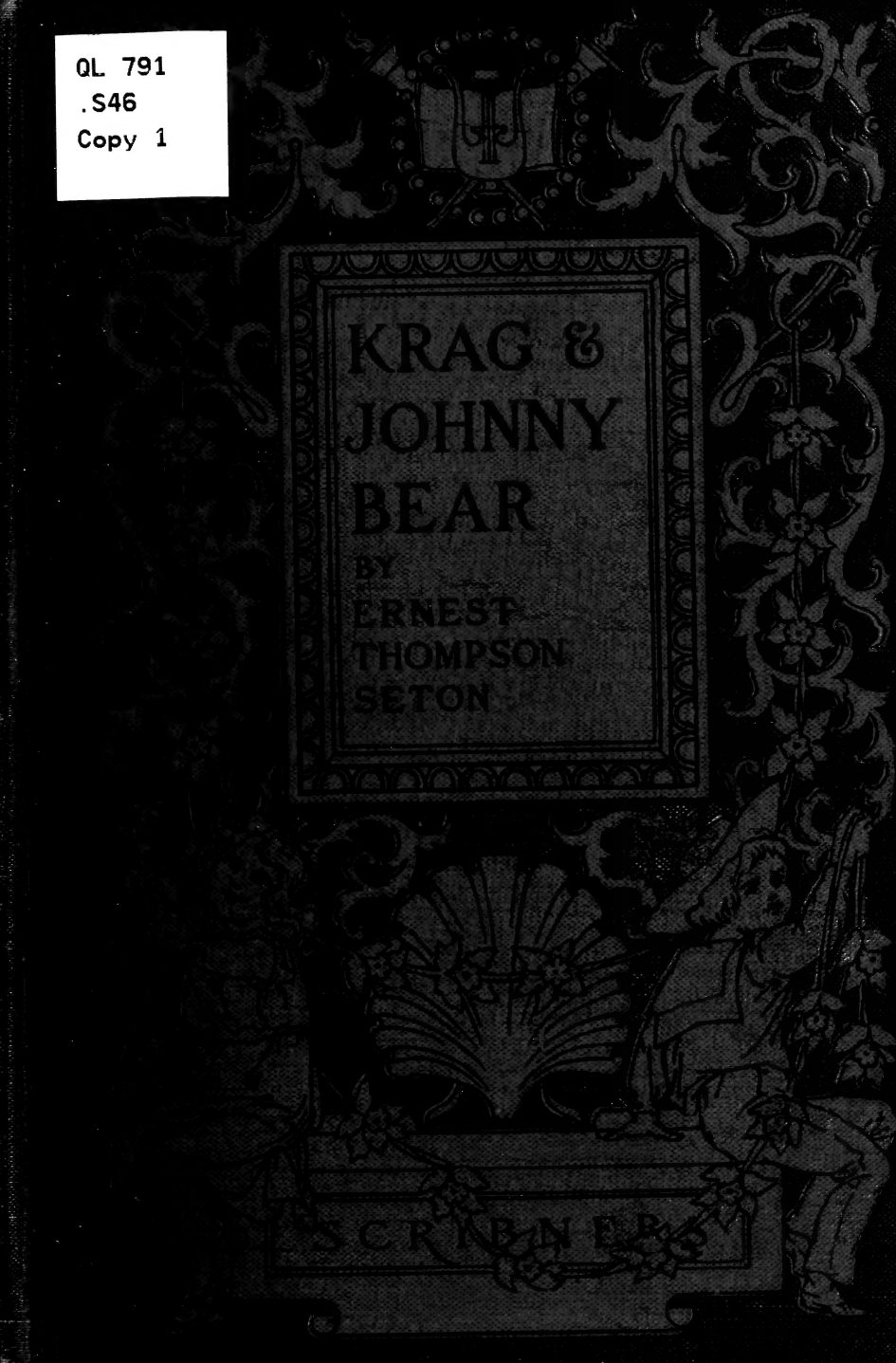
KRAG & JOHNNY BEAR

BY
ERNEST THOMPSON SETON



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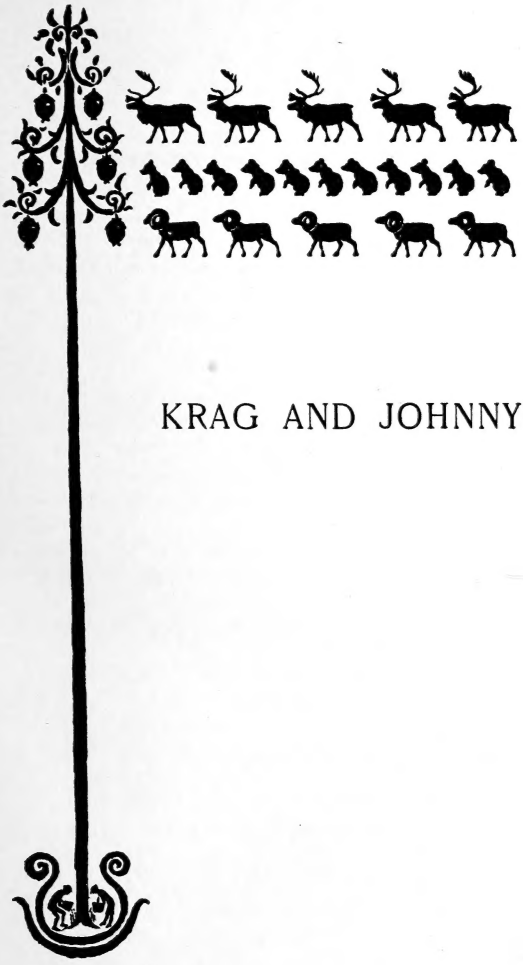


KRAG AND JOHNNY BEAR

Krag.

KRAG AND JOHNNY BEAR

WITH PICTURES

BY

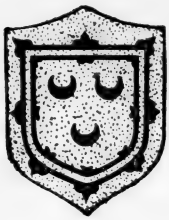
ERNEST THOMPSON SETON

AUTHOR OF "WILD ANIMALS I HAVE KNOWN," "LIVES OF THE HUNTED," "TRAIL OF THE SANDHILL STAG," "BIOGRAPHY OF A GRIZZLY," "ART ANATOMY OF ANIMALS," ETC.

BEING THE PERSONAL HISTORIES OF

KRAG
RANDY
JOHNNY BEAR &
CHINK

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1902



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NEW YORK.

NOTE TO THE READER

This volume bears the same relation to "The Lives of the Hunted" that "Lobo, Rag and Vixen" does to "Wild Animals I Have Known."

Krag is somewhat shortened. The last half is told with little change, as I got it from Scotty and his friends. The adventures described in the first part really happened to other Mountain Rams.

Randy the Troubadour is a composite character. In the stories of Chink and Johnny Bear there is hardly any deviation from the facts.

ERNEST THOMPSON SETON

Wyndygoul, Coscob, Conn.
February 10, 1902

ILLUSTRATIONS

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KRAG . . . . . *Frontispiece*

RANDY DREW THE LINE AT FEATHER BEDS . . 80

BUT JOHNNY WANTED TO SEE 108

TREMBLING WITH FEAR AND WEAKNESS, HE WAS MAKING HIS LAST STAND 140

KRAG

THE KOOTENAY RAM

KRAG

THE KOOTENAY RAM

PART I

A GREAT broad web of satin, shining white, and strewn across, long clumps and trailing wreaths of lilac—almost white—wistaria bloom—pendant, shining, and so delicately wrought in palest silk that still the web was white; and in and out and trailed across, now lost, now plain, two slender twining intertwining chains of golden thread.

I

I see a broken upland in the far Northwest. Its gray and purple rocks are interpatched with colors rich and warm, the new-born colors of the upland spring, the greatest springtime in the world; for where there is no winter there can be no spring. The gloom is measure of the light. So, in this land of long, long winter night, where nature stints her joys for six

hard months, then owns her debt and pays it all at once, the spring is glorious compensation for the past. Six months' arrears of joy are paid in one great lavish outpour. And latest May is made the date of payment. Then spring, great, gorgeous, six-fold spring holds carnival on every ridge.

Even the sullen Gunder Peak, that pierces the north end of the ridge, unsombres just a whit. The upland beams with all the flowers it might have grown in six lost months; yet we see only one. Here, by our feet and farther on, and right and left and onward far away, in great, broad acre beds, the purple lupin blooming. Irregular, broken, straggling patches near, but broader, denser farther on; till on the distant slopes they lie, long, devious belts, like purple clouds at rest.

But late May though it be, the wind is cold; the pools tell yet of frost at night. The White Wind blows. Broad clouds come up, and down comes driving snow. Over the peaks, over the upland and over the upland flowers. Hoary, gray, and white the landscape grows in turn; and one by one the flowers are painted out. But the lupins on their taller, stiffer stems, can fight the snow for long, they bow their whitened heads beneath its load, then, thanks

no little to the wind itself, shake free and stand up defiantly straight, and as fits their royal purple. And when the snowfall ends as suddenly as it began, the clouds roll by and the blue sky sees an upland shining white, but streaked and patched with blots and belts of lovely purple bloom.

And wound across, and in and out, are two long trails of track.

II

Late snow is good trailing, and Scotty Macdougall took down his rifle, and climbed the open hill behind his shanty on Tobacco Creek toward the well-known Mountain Sheep range. The broad white upland, with its lupin bands and patches, had no claim on Scotty's notice, nor was his interest aroused until he came on the double trail in the new snow. At a glance he read it—two full-grown female Mountain Sheep, wandering here and there across the country, with their noses to the wind. Scotty followed the prints for a short time and learned that the Sheep were uneasy, but not alarmed, and less than an hour ahead. They had wandered from one sheltered place to another. Once or twice had laid down for a minute, only

to rise and move on, apparently not hungry, as the abundant food was untouched.

Scotty pushed forward cautiously, scanning the distance and keeping watch on the trail without following it, when, all at once, he swung round a rocky point into view of a little lupin-crowded hollow and from the middle of it leaped the two Sheep.

Up went his rifle, and in a moment one or both would have fallen, had not Scotty's eye, before he pulled, rested on two tiny new-born Lambs that got up on their long wobbly legs, in doubt, for a moment, whether to go to the new-comer, or to follow their mothers.

The old Sheep bleated a shrill alarm to their young and circled back. The Lambs' moment of indecision was over, they felt that their duties lay with the creatures that looked and smelt like themselves, and coolly turned their uncertain steps to follow their mothers.

Of course Scotty could have shot any or all of the Sheep, as he was within twenty yards of the farthest, but there is in man an unreasoning impulse, a wild hankering to catch alive; and without thinking of what he could do with them afterward, Scotty, seeing them so easily in his power, leaned his gun in a safe place and ran after the Lambs. But the distressed moth-

ers had by now communicated a good deal of their alarm to their young, the little things were no longer in doubt that they should avoid the stranger, and when he rushed forward, his onset added the necessary final touch and for the first time in their brief lives they knew danger and instinctively sought to escape it. They were not yet an hour old, but nature had equipped them with a set of valuable instincts. And though the Lambs were slow of foot compared with the man, they showed at once a singular aptitude at dodging, and Scotty failed to secure them at once as he had expected.

Meanwhile the mothers circled about, bleating piteously and urging the little ones to escape. Scotty, plunging around in his attempt, alarmed them more and more, and they put forth all the strength of their feeble limbs in the effort to go to their mothers. The man slipping and scrambling after them was unable to catch either, although more than once he touched one with his hand. But very soon this serious game of tag was adroitly steered by the timid mothers away from the lupin bed, and once on the smooth, firmer ground, the Lambs got an advantage that quite offset the weariness they began to feel, and Scotty, dashing and chasing first this way and

then that, did not realize that the whole thing was being managed by the old ones, till they reached the lowest spur of the Gunder Peak, a ragged, broken, rocky cliff, up which the mothers bounded. Then the little ones felt a new sense, just as a young duck must when first he drops in the water. Their little black rubber hoofs gripped the slippery rocks as no man's foot can do it, and they soared on their new-found mountain wings, up and away, till led by their mothers out of sight.

It was well for them that Scotty had lain aside his rifle, for a Sheep at 100 yards was as good as dead when he pulled on it. He now rushed back for his weapon, but before he could harm them, a bank of fog from the Peak came rolling between. The same White Wind that brought the treacherous trailing snow that had betrayed them to their deadliest foe, now brought the fog that screened them from his view.

So Scotty could only stare up the cliff and, half in admiration, mutter "the little divils, the little divils, too smart for me, and them less'n an hour old."

For now he fully knew the meaning of the restless wandering of the old ones, and the sudden appearance of two new tiny trails.

He spent the rest of the day in bootless hunting and at night went home hungry, to dine off a lump of fat bacon.

III

The rugged peaks are not the chosen home, but rather the safe and final refuge of the Sheep. Once there the mothers felt no fear, and thenceforth, in the weeks that followed, they took care that in feeding, they should never wander far on the open away from their haven on the crags.

The Lambs were of a sturdy stock and grew so fast that within a week they were strong enough to keep up with their mothers when the sudden appearance of a Mountain Lion forced them all to run for their lives.

The snow of the Lambs' birthday had gone again within a few hours and all the hills were now carpeted with grass and flowers, the abundant food for the mothers meant plenty of the best for the little ones and they waggled their tails in satisfaction as they helped themselves.

One of the little fellows, whose distinguishing mark was a very white nose, was stockily built, while his playmate, slightly taller and

more graceful, was peculiar in having little nubbins of horns within a few days of his birth.

They were fairly matched and frisked and raced alongside their mothers or fought together the live-long day. One would dash away and the other behind him try to butt him; or if they came on an inviting hillock they began at once the world-old, world-wide game of King of the Castle. One would mount and hold his friend at bay. Stamping and shaking his little round head, he would give the other to understand that *he* was "King of the Castle"—and then back would go their pretty pink ears, the round woolly heads would press together and the innocent brown eyes roll as they tried to look terribly fierce and push and strive till one, forced to his knees, would wheel and kick up his heels as though to say: "I didn't want your old castle, anyway," but would straightway give himself the lie by seeking out a hillock for himself and, posing on its top with his fiercest look, would stamp and shake his head, after the way that in their language stands for the rhyming challenge in ours, and the combat scene would be repeated.

In these encounters Whitenose generally had the best of it because of his greater

weight, but in the races, Nubbins was easily first. His activity was tireless. From morning till evening he seemed able to caper and jump.

At night they usually slept close against their mothers in some sheltered nook, where they could see the sunrise, or rather where they could feel it, for that was more important, and Nubbins, always active, was sure to be up first of the lambs. Whitenose was inclined to be lazy, and would stay curled up, the last of the family to begin the day of activity. His snowy nose was matched by a white patch behind, as in all Bighorn Sheep, only larger and whiter than usual, and this patch afforded so tempting a mark that Nubbins never could resist a good chance to charge at it. He was delighted if, in the morning, he could waken his little friend by what he considered a tremendous butt on his beautiful patch of white.

Mountain Sheep usually go in bands; the more in the band the more eyes for danger. But the hunter had been very active in the Kootenay country, Scotty in particular had been relentless in the hunting. His shanty roof was littered over with horns of choice Rams, and inside it was half filled with a great pile of Sheepskins awaiting a market. So the

droves of Bighorn were reduced to a few scattering bands, the largest of which was less than thirty, and many, like that of which I speak, had but three or four in it.

Once or twice during the first fortnight of June old Scotty had crossed the sheep-range with his rifle ready, for game was always in season for him, but each time one or the other of the alert mothers saw him afar, and either led quickly away, or by giving a short, peculiar "*sniff*," had warned the others not to move; then all stood still as stones, and so escaped, when a single move might easily have brought sure death. When the enemy was out of sight they quickly changed to some distant part of the range.

One day they had wandered downward toward the piney valley, tempted by the rich grasses. As they reached the edge of the woods, Nubbins's mother held back; she had a deep-laid distrust of the lower levels, especially where wooded. But Whitenose's mother, cropping eagerly at the mountain clover that was here in profusion, was led farther on till she passed under some rocks among the pines. A peculiar smell caused her to start, she looked around, then wheeled to quit the woods, but a moment later a great Wolverine

sprang from the bank on to her back and laid her low in an instant.

Nubbins and his mother got a glimpse of the great brown enemy and fled up the rocks, but little Whitenose was stupefied with terror. He stood by staring and feebly bleating till the Wolverine, with merciful mercilessness, struck him down as he had done the mother.

IV

Nubbins's mother was a medium-sized, well-knit creature. She had horns longer and sharper than usual for a Ewe, and they were of the kind called Spikehorns or Spikers; she also had plenty of good Sheep sense. The region above Tobacco Creek had been growing more dangerous each month, thanks chiefly to Scotty, but the mother Sheep's intention to move out was decided for her by the morning's tragedy.

She careered along the slope of the Gunder Peak at full speed, but before going over each rising ground she stopped and looked over it, ahead and back, remaining still as a lichen-patched rock for a minute or more in each place while she scanned the range around.

Once as she did this she saw a dark, moving figure on a range behind her. It was old Scotty. She was in plain view, but she held as still as could be and so escaped notice, and when the man was lost behind the rocks she bounded away faster than before, with little Nubbins scampering after. At each ridge she looked out carefully, but seeing no more either of her enemy or her friends, she pushed on quietly all that day, travelling more slowly as the dangerfield was left behind.

Toward evening, as she mounted the Yak-in-i-kak watershed, she caught a glimpse of moving forms on a ridge ahead; after a long watch she made out that they were in the uniform of Sheep—gray, with white striped stockings and white patches on face and stern. They were going up wind. Keeping out of view she made so as to cross their back trail, which she soon found, and thus learned that her guess was right. There were the tracks of two large Bighorn, but the trail also said that they were Rams. According to Mountain Sheep etiquette the Rams form one community and the Ewes and Lambs another. They must not mix or seek each other's society, excepting during the early winter, the festal months, the time of love and mating.

Nubbins's mother, or the Spikerdoe, as we may call her, left the trail and went over the watershed, glad to know that this was a Sheep region. She rested for the night in a hollow, and next morning she journeyed on, feeding as she went. Presently the mother caught a scent that made her pause. She followed it a little. Others joined on or criss-crossed, and she knew now that she had found the trail of a band of Ewes and Lambs. She followed steadily, and Nubbins skipped alongside, missing his playmate, but making up as far as possible by doing double work.

Within a very few minutes she sighted the band, over a dozen in all—her own people. The top of her head was just over a rock, so that she saw them first, but when Nubbins poked up his round head to see, the slight movement caught the eye of a watchful mother in the flock. She gave the signal that turned all the band to statues, with heads their way. It was now the Spiker's turn. She walked forth in plain view. The band dashed over the hill, but circled behind it to the left, while Nubbins and his mother went to the right.

In this way their positions in the wind were reversed. Formerly she could smell them;

now they could smell her, and, having already seen her uniform from afar, they were sure her credentials were right. She came cautiously up to them. A leading Ewe walked out to meet her. They sniffed and gazed. The leader stamped her feet, and the Spikerdoe got ready to fight. They advanced, their heads met with a "whack," then, as they pushed, the Spikerdoe twisted so that one of her sharp points rested on the other Ewe's ear. The pressure became very unpleasant. The enemy felt she was getting the worst of it, so she sniffed, turned, and, shaking her head, rejoined her friends. The Spikerdoe walked after her, while little Nubbins, utterly puzzled, stuck close to her side. The flock wheeled and ran, but circled back, and as the Spiker stood her ground, they crowded around her, and she was admitted one of their number. This was the ceremony, so far as she was concerned. But Nubbins had to establish his own footing. There were some seven or eight Lambs in the flock. Most of them were older and bigger than he, and, in common with some other animals, they were ready to persecute the stranger simply because he was strange.

The first taste of this that Nubbins had was an unexpected "bang" behind. It had always

seemed very funny to him when he used to give Whitenose a surprise of this kind, but now there seemed nothing funny about it. It was simply annoying, and when he turned to face the enemy, another one charged from another direction, and whichever way he turned, there was a Lamb ready to butt at him, till poor Nubbins was driven to take refuge under his mother. Of course she could protect him, but he could not stay there always, and the rest of the day with the herd was an unhappy one for poor Nubbins, but a very amusing one for the others. He was so awed by their numbers, the suddenness of it all, that he did not know what to do. His activity helped but little. Next morning it was clear that the others intended to have some more fun at his expense. One of these, the largest, was a stocky little Ram. He had no horns yet, but when they did come they were just like himself, thickset and crooked and rough, so that, reading ahead, we may style him "Krinklehorn." He came over and, just as Nubbins rose, hind legs first, as is Sheep fashion, the other hit him square and hard. Nubbins went sprawling, but jumped up again, and in something like a little temper went for the bully. Their small heads came together with about as much noise

as two balls of yarn, but they both meant to win. Nubbins was aroused now, and he dashed for that other fellow. Their heads slipped past, and now it was head to shoulder, both pounding away. At first Nubbins was being forced back, but soon his unusual sprouts of horns did good service, and, after getting one or two punches in his ribs from them, the bully turned and ran. The others, standing round, realized that the new-comer was fit. They received him as one of their number, and the hazing of Nubbins was ended.

V

The Spikerdoe soon became known as a very wise Sheep, wiser than any other in the flock except one, the chosen leader, and that leader was no other than the mother of Krinklehorn, the little bully. Sheep do not give each other names—but they have the idea which in time resulted in names with us, they always think of their leaders as the *Wise One*, who is safe to follow, and I shall speak of her as such.

Within a few weeks she was killed by a Mountain Lion. The herd scattered as the terrible animal sprang, and the Spikerdoe led for the cliffs, followed by the rest. When she reached

a safe place high up, she turned to wait for the stragglers, who came up quickly. Then they heard from far below a faint "*baah*" of a Lamb. All cocked their ears and waited. It is not wise to answer too quickly, it may be the trick of some enemy. But it came again, the familiar "*baah*" of one of their own flock, and Spikerdoe answered it.

A rattling of stones, a scrambling up banks, another "*baah*" for guidance and there appeared among them little Krinklehorn — an orphan now.

Of course he did not know this yet, any more than the others did. But as the day wore on and no mother came in response to his plaintive calls, and as his little stomach began also to cry out for something more than grass or water, he realized his desolation and "*baahed*" more and more plaintively. When night came he was cold as well as hungry—he must snuggle up to someone or freeze. No one took much notice of him, but Spikerdoe, seemingly the new leader, called once or twice in answer to his call, and almost by accident he drifted near her when she lay down and warmed himself against her beside his ancient enemy, young Nubbins.

In the morning he seemed to Mother Spikerdoe to be her own, in a limited sense. Rubbing

against Nubbins made him smell like her own, and when Nubbins set about helping himself to a breakfast of warm milk, poor hungry Krinklehorn took the liberty of joining in on the other side. Thus Nubbins found himself nose to nose and dividing his birthright with his old-time enemy. But neither he nor his mother made any objection, and thus it was that Krinklehorn was adopted by his mother's rival.

VI

There was no one of the others that could equal Spikerdoe in sagacity. She knew all the range now, and it was soon understood that she was to lead. It was also understood that Krinklehorn, as well as Nubbins, was her Lamb. The two were like brothers in many things. But Krinklehorn had no sense of gratitude to his foster-mother and he always nursed his old grudge against Nubbins, and now that they drank daily of the same drink, he viewed Nubbins as his rival and soon showed his feeling by a fresh attempt to master him. But Nubbins was better able to take care of himself now than ever. Krinklehorn got nothing but a few good prods for his pains, and their relative status was settled.

During the rest of the season they grew up side by side. Krinklehorn, thickset and sulky, with horns fast growing, but thick and crinkly. And Nubbins—well! it is not fair to call him Nubbins any longer, as his horns were growing fast and long, so that we may henceforth speak of him as Krag, a name that he got years afterward in the country around Gunder Peak, and the name by which he went down to history.

During the summer Krag and Krinklehorn grew in wit as well as in size. They learned all the ordinary rules of life among Bighorn. They knew how to give the warning "*sniff*" when they saw something, and the danger "*Snoo-of*" when they were sure it was dangerous. They were acquainted with all the pathways and could have gone alone to any of the near salt-licks when they felt the need of it.

They could do the zigzag bounding that baffles the rush of an enemy, as well as the stiff-legged jumping which carries them safely up glassy slippery slopes. Krag even excelled his mother in these accomplishments. They were well equipped to get their own living, they could eat grass, and so it was time they were weaned, for Spikerdoe had to lay on her fat to

keep warm in the coming winter. The youngsters themselves would have been in no hurry to give up their comforting breakfast, but the supply began to run short, and the growing horns of the Lambs began to interfere with the mother's comfort so much that she proceeded firmly and finally with their weaning, and long before the earliest snow flurry grizzled the upland, she had them quite independent of her for their daily food.

VII

When the earliest snows of winter came, all the Lambs were weaned and doing for themselves, and the Ewes were fat and flourishing, but, being free from domestic cares, had thoughts for other matters.

With the early frosts and the bracing air came the mating season and, determined to find their mates, the Sheep travelled about the likeliest parts of the hills.

Several times during the summer they had seen one or two great Rams in the distance, but an exchange of signals had made clear to each what the other was, and they had avoided each other's company.

But now, when a pair of large Sheep were sighted, and the usual signals exchanged, there

seemed no sign of a wish to avoid each other. As the two tall strangers came on, their great size, majestic forms, and vast curling horns, left no doubt as to their sex, and, proud of their horns and powers, they pranced forward. But the forwardness of Spikerdoe and her band now gave place to a decided bashfulness. They turned, as though to avoid the new-comers. This led to pursuit and to much manœuvring before the two Rams were permitted to join the herd. Then came the inevitable quarrel. The Rams had so far been good friends, were evidently chums, but chumship and love rivalry cannot dwell together. It was the old story—the jealous pang, the seeking for cause, the challenge, and the duel. But these are not always duels to the death. The Rams charged at each other, their horns whacked together till the chips flew from them, but after a few rounds one of them, the lighter, of course, was thrown backward, and, leaping up, he tried to escape. The other followed for a quarter of a mile, and, as he declined a further fight, the victor came proudly back, and claimed and was allowed the position and joys of Sultan of the band.

Krag and Krinklehorn were ignored. They were in awe of the great Ram who now took charge, and they felt that their safest plan was

to keep as far as possible away from the present social activities of the flock, as they were not very sure of their own standing.

During the first part of that winter they were under guidance of the Ram. He was a big, handsome fellow, not without a streak of masculine selfishness that made him take care to have the best of the food and to keep a sharp lookout for danger. Food was plentiful, for the Ram knew enough to lead them not into the sheltered ravines where the snow was deep, but up on the bleakest ridges of the upland, where the frigid wind lays bare the last year's grass and, furthermore, where no enemy can approach unseen; so all went well.

VIII

The springtime came, with its thrilling sounds and feelings. Obedient to their ancient law, the Ram and the band of Ewes had parted company in midwinter. The feeling had been growing for days. They were less disposed to follow him, and sometimes he lingered far away for hours. One day he did not rejoin them, and thenceforth to the end of the winter they followed the Spikerdoe as of old.

The little ones came about the first of June. Many of the mothers had two each, but Spikerdoe, now the Wise One, had but one, as the year before, and this little one displaced Krag for good and engrossed all the mother's attention. He even hindered her in her duties as a leader, and one day, as she was feeding him and watching the happy wagging of his tail, another Sheep gave an alarm. All froze except a certain nervous, fidgety, young Ewe, who never could keep still. She crossed before the Wise One. There was a far-away "crack." Fidgets dropped dead, and the Spikerdoe fell with a stifled "*baah!*" But she sprang to her feet, forgetting her own pain, and, looking wildly about her for her Lamb, she leaped on the ridge to follow the others. "Bang!" went the rifle again, and the old Sheep got a first glimpse of the enemy. It was the man who had once so nearly caught the Lambs. He was a long way off, but the ball whistled before the Sheep's nose. She sprang back and changed her course, thereby leaving the rest, then leaped over the ridge bleating to her little one to follow—bleating, too, from pain, for she was hard hit. But she leaped headlong down a rocky place, and the high ground came between. Down the gully

she bounded, and out along the further ridge, keeping out of sight so well that, though Scotty ran as fast as he could to the edge, he never saw her again. He chuckled as he noted the clots of blood, but these soon ceased, and after a long attempt to keep the trail, he gave it up, cursed his luck, and went back to the victim he had secured.

Away went Spikerdoe and her Lamb, the mother guiding, but the little one ahead. Her instinct told her that upward was the way to safety. Up the Gunder Peak she must go, but keep from being seen. So she went on, in spite of a burning wound, always keeping a ridge between, till round the nearest rocks she paused to look. She saw no sign of either her friends or her foe. She felt she had a deadly wound. She must escape lest her strength give out. She set off again at a run, forging ahead, and the little one following or running ahead as he pleased. Up they went till the timber line was reached, and upward still, her instinct urged her on.

Another lofty bench was scaled, and then she sighted a long white streak, a snow-drift lingering in a deep ravine. She eagerly made for that. There was a burning pain through her loins, and on each side was a dark stain on her

coat. She craved a cooling touch, and on reaching the white patch sank on her side, her wound against the snow.

There could be only one end to such a wound—two hours, three hours at farthest, and then—well, never mind.

And the little one? He stood dumbly gazing at her. He did not understand. He only knew that he was cold and hungry now, and that his mother, to whom he had looked for everything, food, warmth, guidance, and sympathy, was so cold and still.

He did not understand it. He did not know what next. But we do, and the Raven on the Rock knew. Better for him, far better, quicker and more merciful, had the rifle served him as it did his mother.

IX

Krag was a fine young Ram now, taller than any of the Ewes, and with long scimitars of horns. Krinklehorn also was well grown, as heavy as Krag, but not so tall, and with horns that looked diseased, they were so short, thick, and bumpy.

The autumn came again, with the grand reunion of the families, the readvent of the Ram,

and also with a readjustment that Krag did not look for. He was just beginning to realize his importance in the flock, when the great Ram came, with his curling horns and thick bull neck, and the first thing he did was to bundle Krag out of the flock. Krag, Krinklehorn, and three or four more of their age, were packed off by themselves, for such is etiquette among Sheep. As soon as the young males reach or nearly reach maturity they must go off to study life for themselves, just as a boy leaves home for college. And during the four years that followed Krag led a roving bachelor life with a half dozen companions. He became the leader, for he inherited his mother's wit, and they travelled into far countries, learning new pastures, new ways, and new wisdom, and fitted themselves to become fathers of large and successful families, for such is the highest ambition of every good Mountain Ram.

It was not choice that left Krag unmated, but a combination of events against which he vainly chafed still left him with his bachelor crew. It was really better so. It seemed hard at the time, but it proved his making, for he was thus enabled to develop to the full his wonderful powers before being hampered and weakened by the responsibilities and mingled

joys of a family. Each year the bachelor Rams grew handsomer. Even sulky Krinklehorn became a tall and strong, if not a fine looking, Ram. He had never gotten over his old dislike of Krag. Once or twice he put forth his strength to worst him, and even tried to put him over a cliff, but he got so severely punished for it that thenceforth he kept away from his foster-brother. But Krag was a joy to behold. As he bounded up the jagged cliffs, barely touching each successive point with his clawed and padded hoofs, floating up like a bird, deriding all foes that thought of following afoot, and the sunbeams changing and flashing from his back as the supple muscles working changed the surface form — he was more like a spirit thing that had no weight and knew no fear of falling than a great three-hundred-pound Ram with five year-rings on his horns.

And such horns! The bachelors that owned his guidance had various horns reflecting each the owner's life and gifts. Some rough half-moons, some thick, some thin, but Krag's curled in one great sweep, three-quarters of a circle, and the five-year marks told, first beginning at the point, of the year when he was a Lamb, and grew the straight long spikes that

had helped him so well in his early fight. Next year the growth was thicker and much longer. The next two years told of yet more robust growth with lesser length, but the last was record of a year of good food, of perfect health, and unexampled growth, for the span grown then was longer, wider, and cleaner horns than any of the others.

Tucked away under the protecting shadow of each rugged base, like things too precious to expose, were his beautiful eyes. Dark brown when he was a lamb, yellowish brown when a yearling, they were now, in his early prime, great orbs of shining gold, or splendid amber jewels, with a long, dark, misty depth in each, through which the whole bright world was born and mirrored on his brain.

There is no greater joy to the truly living thing than the joy of being alive, of feeling alive in every part and power. It was a joy to Krag now to stretch his perfect limbs in a shock of playful battle with his friends. It was a joy to press his toes on some thin ledge, then sail an impossible distance across some fearful chasm to another ledge, whose size and distance he gauged with absolute precision. It was a joy to him to set the Mountain Lions at naught by a subtle ricochet from rock to rock,

or to turn and drive the bounding Blacktail band down pell-mell backward to their own, the lower, levels. There was a subtle pleasure in every move, and a glorying in his glorious strength, which, after all, is beauty. And when to such a being the early winter brought also the fire of love and set him all aglow, he was indeed a noble thing to see. In very wantonness of strength and power he bounded, ball-like, up or down long rugged slopes, leaping six feet high where one would have fully answered every end, except the pleasure of doing it. But so he went. Seeking, searching—for what? He could not have told. But he would know when he found it. Away he went at the head of his band, careering till they crossed the trail of another band and, instinct guided, he followed after. In a mile or two the other band was sighted, a group of Ewes. They fled, of course, but being cornered on a rugged bench, they stood, and after due punctilio they allowed the Rams to approach.

The Bighorn is no monogamist. The finest Ram claims all of the Ewes in the flock, and any question of his claims must be settled on the spot in mortal fight. Hitherto there had been a spirit of good fellowship among the Rams, but now that was changed, and when

great Krag bounded forward, snorting out a challenge to all the rest to disprove his right of might, there was none to face him; and, strange to tell, with many claimants, there was no fight. There was nothing now for the rest to do but to wheel at his command and leave him to the devotion and admiration of his conquest.

If, as they say, beauty and prowess are winning cards in all walks of animal life, then Krag must have been the idol of his band. For matched with Rams he had seemed a wonder, and among the Ewes his strength, his size, and the curling horns must have made of him a demi-god, and the winged heart and the brimming cup were his.

But on the second day of joy two Rams appeared, and after manœuvring came near. One was a fine big animal, as heavy in the body as Krag, but with smaller horns, and the other was — yes, it surely was — Krinklehorn. The new Ram snuffed a challenge as he came near, then struck the ground with his foot, meaning "I am a better Ram than you and mean to oust you from your present happy position."

Krag's eyes blazed. He curled his massive neck. He threw his chin up and down like a champing horse, shook his great horns as

though they were twigs, laid back his ears and charged, and forward sprang the foe. "Choch" they came together, but the stranger had an advantage of ground, which left the first onset a draw.

The Rams backed off, each measuring the other and the distance and seeking for firm footing, kept on the edge of the great bench, then with a "whoof" they came on again. "Whack"—and the splinters flew, for they both were prime. But this time Krag clearly had the best of it. He followed up his advantage at once with a second "whack" at short range, and twisting around, his left horn hooked under the right of his foe, when to his utter dismay he received a terrific blow on his flank from an unknown enemy. He was whirled around and would have been dashed over the cliff, but that his horn was locked in that of his first foeman and so he was saved; for no Ram has weight enough in his hind quarter to oppose the headlong charge of another. Krag scrambled to his feet again, just in time to see the new enemy irresistibly carried by the violence of his own charge over the ledge and down.

It was a long time before a far-away crash told to those on the ledge that Krinklehorn had

found the very end he plotted for his foster-brother. Ram fights are supposed to be fair duels. Krinklehorn, failing in fair fight, had tried foul, and had worked his own destruction; for not even a Bighorn can drop two hundred feet on rock and live.

Krag now turned on his other foe with double fury. One more shock and the stranger was thrown, defeated. He leaped to his feet and bounded off. For a time Krag urged him to further flight by the same means that Krinklehorn once used to persecute him, then returned in triumph to live unmolested with his family.

X

Scotty had gone from his Tobacco Creek location in 1887. The game was pretty well hunted out. Sheep had become very scarce; news of new gold strikes in Colorado had attracted him southward, and the old shanty was deserted. Five years went by with Krag as the leading Ram. It was five years under a good genius, with an evil genius removed. Five years of prosperity then, for the Bighorn.

Krag carried farther the old ideas that were known to his mother. He taught his band to

abjure the lowlands entirely. The forest coverts were full of evil, and the only land of safety was the open wind-swept peaks where neither lions nor riflemen could approach unseen. He found more than one upland salt-lick where their natural need could be supplied without the dangerous lowland journeys that they once had thought necessary. He taught his band never to walk along the top of a ridge, but always along one side so as to look down both ways without being conspicuous. And he added one famous invention of his own. This was the "hide." If a hunter happens close to a band of Sheep before they see him, the old plan was to make a dash for safety. A good enough plan in the days of bows and arrows or even of muzzle-loading rifles, but the repeating rifle is a different arm. Krag himself learned and then taught his tribe, to crouch and lie perfectly still when thus surprised. In nine cases out of ten this will baffle a human hunter, as Krag found times without number.

It is always good for a race, when a great one arises in it. Krag marked a higher level for the Bighorns. His children multiplied on the Yak-i-ni-kak around the Gunder Peak, and eastward as far as Kintla Lake at least. They were healthier and much wiser than had been the

Bighorn of other days, and being so their numbers steadily increased.

Five years had made some changes in Krag's appearance, but his body was square and round and muscular as ever; his perfect legs seemed unchanged in form or in force; his head was as before, with the heart-shaped white patch on his nose; and his jewel eyes blazed as of old; but his horns, how they had changed! Before they were uncommon; now they were unique. The massive sweeps—the graven records of his life—were now a circle and a quarter, and they told of years of joy and years of strife, and one year, tallied in a narrow band of dark and wrinkled horn, told of the year when all the mountains were scourged by the epidemic of grip; when many Lambs and their mothers died; when many strong Rams succumbed; when Krag himself had been smitten but recovered, thanks to his stalwart growth and native force, and after a time of misery had shown no traces of those wretched months, except in the yearly growth of horn. For that year, 1889, it was barely an inch in width, plain for those who read such things—a record of a time of want.

XI

At length old Scotty came back. Like all mountaineers he was a wanderer, and he once more returned alone to his shanty on Tobacco Creek. The sod roof had fallen in, and he hesitated to repair it. Anyhow he would prospect awhile first. He took his rifle, and sought the familiar upland. Before he returned, he had sighted two large bands of Mountain Sheep. That decided him. He spent a couple of days repairing the shanty, and the curse of the Yak-i-ni-kak returned.

Scotty was now a middle-aged man. His hand was strong and steady, but his eyes had lost some of their power. As a youth he scorned all aids to sight. But now he carried a field-glass. In the weeks that followed he scanned a thousand benches through the glass, and many a time his eye rested on the form of the Gunder Ram. The first time he saw him, he exclaimed, "Heavens, what horns!" Then added, prophetically, "Them's mine!" and he set out to make them his. But the Bighorn of his early days were fools to these, and month after month passed without his ever getting a nearer view of the great Ram. The Ram had more than once seen him at short range, but Scotty never knew it.

Several times through the glass he marked old Krag from afar on a bench. Then after a labor of hours stalked round to the place only to find him gone. Sometimes he really was gone, but on more than one occasion, the Ram was close at hand and hidden, watching his foe.

Then came a visitor to Scotty's shanty, a cattle man named Lee, a sportsman by instinct and a lover of dogs and horses. His horses were of little use in mountain hunting, but his wolf-hounds—three beautiful Russian Barzois —were his constant companions, and he suggested to Scotty that it would be a good plan to try the dogs on the Bighorn.

Scotty grinned, "Guess you're from the plains, pard. Wait till you see the kind of place whar ole Krag hangs around."

XII

Where the Yak-i-ni-kak River leaves its parent mountains, south of Gunder Peak, it comes from a tremendous gorge called Skinkler's Gulch. This is a mere crack in the vast granite hill, but is at least 500 feet in depth. Southward from the back of Gunder Peak is a broken upland that runs to a point at this cañon, and

ends in a long promontory over the raging walled-in stream.

This upland is good Sheep range and by a strange chance Scotty, coming up there with Lee and the three wolf-hounds, got a glimpse of the Gunder Ram. The men kept out of sight and hurried along by the hollows toward the spot. But it was the old story. No sign of their quarry. They found his great hoof-mark just where they had seen him, so it was no illusion, but the hard rocks about refused further information, and no doubt Scotty would have had another mysterious disappearance to add to his list, but that the dogs, nosing about in all of the near hollows and thickets of dwarf birch, broke out suddenly into a loud clamor, and as they did so, up jumped a huge, gray, white-sterned animal—the Ram, the wonderful Gunder Ram. Over the low bushes, over the broken rocks — bounding, soaring, floating; supple, certain, splendid — he bore the great curling wonders on his head as lightly as a lady might her ear-rings, and then, from various other coverts, sprang up his band and joined him. Up flew the rifles, but in a moment the three great dogs closing in, gave unwitting screen to the one victim on which every thought was fixed, and not a shot was heard. Away

they went, the Ram forging quickly to the lead and the others stringing along after. Over the upland, flying, sailing, leaping, and swerving they went. Over the level plains the dogs would soon have caught the hindmost, or perhaps their noblest prey, but on the rugged rocks, it was clear that the Sheep were gaining. The men ran, one to the right, the other to the left, the better to keep sight, and Krag, cut off from the peak, dashed southward, over the benchland. Now it was a straight race. On it went—on, southward. The dogs gained and were near catching the hindmost Sheep—then it seemed that the Ram dropped back and now ran the rearmost. A rugged stretch was reached and there the Sheep gained steadily, though little. One, two, three miles and the chase was sweeping along the rocky ridge that ends in the sudden gash of Skinkler's Gulch. A minute more and the crowd of Sheep were rounded up and cornered on the final rock. They huddled together in terror, 500 feet of dizzy cañon all round, three fierce dogs, and two fiercer men behind. Then, a few seconds later, old Krag dashed up. Cornered at last, he wheeled to fight, for the wild thing never yields.

He was now so far from the bounding dogs,

that two rifle balls whistled near. Of the dogs he had no fears; them he could fight, but the rifles were sure death. There was one chance left. The granite walls of the Yak-i-ni-kak could prove no harder than the human foe, the dogs were within forty yards, now, fine courageous animals, keen for fight, fearless of death, and behind, the hunters, remorseless and already triumphant. Sure death from them or doubtful life in the gulch. There was no time to hesitate, he, the leader, must act. He wheeled to the edge and—*leaped* down—down, not to the bottom, not blindly — thirty feet downward, across the dizzy chasm, was a little jut of rock, no bigger than his nose. The only one in sight, all the rest smooth, sheer or overhanging. But Krag landed fairly, poised just a heart-beat, in a flash his blazing eyes took in another point, his only hope, on the other side, hidden under the overhanging rocks he had leaped from. His supple loins and corded limbs, bent, pulsed, and floated him across, there got fresh guidance to his flight, then back and sometimes to a mere roughness of the rock on which his hoofs of horn and rubber built gripped for an instant, took fresh ricochet to another point. Then, sidewise fifteen feet and down, down with modulated impact from point

to point, till, with a final drop of twenty feet, he reached a ledge of safety far below.

And the others inspired by his example followed fast, a long cascade of Sheep. Had he failed at one point all must have failed. But now they came down headlong. It was splendid, it was inspiring, hop, skip, down they came, one after the other, now ten, now twenty feet, first to last, leaping, sailing, bounding from point to ledge, from ledge to point, with masterly command of thew and hoof, with marvellous poise and absolute success.

But just as the last had reached the second slender specklike foothold for its life—three white and yellow creatures whirled past her in the air with gurgled gasps of horror, to perish far below. The hounds, impetuous and brave, never hesitated to follow a foe and never knew how far more gifted was that foe than themselves, until it was too late. Down below almost at the water's edge Krag paused at length. Far above he heard the yells and whistles of the hunters; below in the boiling Yak-i-ni-kak he saw a battered white and yellow form being hurried to the sea.

Lee and Scotty stood blankly at the edge. Sheep and dogs had vanished: no possibility of

escape for any. Scotty uttered words that had no bearing on the case, only they were harsh blasphemous words and seemed to be necessary. Lee had a choking feeling in his throat, and he felt as no man can comprehend who has not lost a noble dog by a sudden, tragic, and untimely end.

"Bran! Rollo! Ida!" he called in lingering hope, but the only response was from the Western Wind that "snoofed" and whistled as it swept down Skinkler's Gulch.

Part II

LEE was a young, warm-hearted, impulsive cattle-man. For a day or two he hung about the shanty. The loss of his three friends was a sad blow: he had no heart for more mountaineering. But a few days later, a spell of bracing weather helped his spirits, and he agreed, when Scotty suggested a hunt. They reached the upper level when Scotty, who had from time to time been scanning the hills with his glass, suddenly exclaimed:

"Hell! If thar ain't the old Gunder Ram; thought he was smashed in Skinkler's Gulch," and he sat down in amazement. Lee took the glass and he recognized the wonderful Ram by his superb horns; the color rushed to the young man's face. Now was his chance for glory and revenge at once! "Poor old Bran, good Rollo, and Ida!"

But few animals have cunning enough to meet the combined drive and ambush. Scotty knew the lay of the land as well as the habits of the Ram.

"He ain't agoin' to run down the wind and he ain't agoin' to quit the rocks. That means he'll pass up by the Gunder Peak, if he moves at

all, an' he must take one side or the other. He won't go the west side if I show meself once that ar way. So you take the east, I'll give you two hours to get placed. I've a notion he'll cross that spur by that ledge."

Lee set out for his post, Scotty waited two hours, then moved on to a high ridge and clear against the sky he waved his arms and walked up and down a few times. The Ram was not in sight, but Scotty knew he would see.

Then the old mountaineer circled back by hidden ways to the south and began to walk and cut over the ridges toward the place where the Ram had been. He did not expect to see old Krag, but he did expect the Ram to see him. Lee was at his post and, after a brief spell, he sighted the great Ram himself bounding lightly down a ridge a mile away, and close behind him were three Ewes. They disappeared down a pine-clad hollow, and when they reappeared on the next ridge they were running as though in great alarm, their ears laid back and from the hollow behind came, not as Lee expected, the "crack" of Scotty's rifle, or the sound of his yell, but the hunting chorus of Timber Wolves. Among the rocks the Sheep could easily escape, but among the timber or on the level such as now lay ahead,

the advantage was with the Wolves and a minute later these swept up in sight, five shaggy furry monsters. The level open was crossed at whirling speed. The Sheep, racing for their lives, soon lengthened out into a procession in order of speed. Far ahead the great Ram, behind him, with ten-yard gaps between each, the three Ewes, and forty yards behind the last the five grim Wolves—closing, gaining at every leap. The benchland narrowed eastward to pass a rocky shoulder. Long years and countless perils had taught the Sheep that in the rocks was safety, and that way led the Ram. But in the tangled upland birch the last of the Ewes was losing ground, she gasped a short "*baah*," as thrown by a curling root she lost a few more precious yards. The Wolves were almost within leaping distance when Krag reached the shoulder ledge. But a shoulder above means a ravine below. In a moment, at that call of distress, Krag wheeled on the narrow ledge and faced the foe. He stood to one side and the three Ewes leapt past him and on to safety. Then on came the Wolves with a howl of triumph. Many a Sheep had they pulled down and now they knew they soon would feast. Without a pause they closed, but in such a narrow pass it was one at a time.

The leader sprang, but those death-dealing fangs closed only on a solid mass of horn and back of that was a force that crushed his head against himself and dashed him at his friend behind with such a fearful vim that both were hurled over the cliff to perish on the rocks. On came the rest, the Ram had no time to back up for a charge, but a sweep of that great head was enough, the points, forefronting now, as they did when he was a Lamb, speared and hurled the next Wolf and the next, and then Krag found a chance to back up and gather his force. None but a mad Wolf could have failed to take warning, but on he came and Krag, in savage glory of the fight, let loose that living thunderbolt—himself—and met the last of the furry monsters with a shock that crushed him flat against the rock, then picked him up on his horns as he might a rag and hurled him farthest yet, and standing on the edge he watched him whirl and gasp till swallowed in the chasm.

The great Ram raised his splendid head, blew a long blast from his nostrils like a war-horse and gazed a moment to see if more were coming, then turned and lightly bounded after the Ewes he had so ably guarded.

From his hiding-place young Lee took in the

whole scene with eager, blazing eyes. Only fifty yards away from him it had passed.

He was an easy mark, fifty yards standing—he was a splendid mark, all far beyond old Scotty's wildest talk; but Lee had seen a deed that day that stirred his blood. He felt no wish to end that life, but sat with brightened eyes and said, with fervor: "You grand old warrior! I do not care if you did kill my dogs. You did it fair. I'll never harm you. For me you may go in safety."

But the Ram never knew; and Scotty never understood.

II

There was once a wretch who, despairing of other claims to notice, thought to achieve a name by destroying the most beautiful building on earth. This is the mind of the head-hunting sportsman. The nobler the thing that he destroys, the greater the deed, the greater his pleasure, and the greater he considers his claim to fame.

During the years that followed more than one hunter saw the great Ram, and feasted his covetous eyes on his unparalleled horns. His fame even reached the cities. Dealers in the wonderful offered fabulous prices for the head

that bore them—set blood money on the life that grew them, and many came to try their luck, and failed. Then Scotty, always needy, was fired by a yet larger money offer, and setting out with his partner they found the Ram, with his harem about him. But in three days of hard following they never got a second glimpse, and the partner "reckoned thar was easier money to git" and returned home.

But back of Scotty's sinister gray eyes was the fibre of dogged persistency that has made his race the masters of the world. He returned with Mitchell to the shanty, but only to prepare for a long and obstinate hunt. His rifle, his blanket, his pipe, with matches, tobacco, a pot, a bundle of jerked venison and three or four pounds of chocolate, were all he carried. He returned alone next day to the place where he had left the track of the Ram and followed it fast in the snow; winding about in and out and obscured by those of his band, but always distinguishable by its size. Once or twice Scotty came on the spots where the band had been lying down and from time to time he scanned the distance with his glass. But he saw nothing of them. At night he camped on their trail, next day he took it up again; after following for hours, he came on the place where evidently

the Ram had stopped to watch him afar, and so knew of his pursuer. Thenceforth the trail of the band for a long time was a single line as they headed for distant pastures.

Scotty followed doggedly behind, all day he followed, and at night, in a little hollow, crouched like a wild beast in his lair, with this difference only, he had a fire and he smoked a pipe in very human fashion. In the morning he went on as before—once or twice in the far distance he saw the band of sheep travelling steadily southward. Next day passed and the Sheep were driven to the south end of the Yak-i-ni-kak range, just north of Whitefish Lake.

South of this was the Half-moon Prairie, east the broken land that stretched toward the north fork of the Flathead, and north of them their pertinacious and deadly foe. The Sheep were in doubt now, and as old Krag sought to sneak back by the lower benches of the east slope, he heard a "crack" and a stinging something touched one horn and tore the hair from his shoulder.

The touch of a rifle-ball on the horn of a Ram has a more or less stunning effect, and Krag, dazed for a moment, gave the signal which in our speech is "Everyone for himself now," and so the band was scattered.

Some went this way and some that, running more or less openly. But Scotty's one thought was old Krag. He heeded no other, and when the Ram made straight away eastward down the hill, Scotty again took up his trail and cursed and gasped as he followed.

The Flathead River was only a few miles away. The Ram crossed on the ice and keeping the roughest ground, turning when the wind turned, he travelled all day northeastward, with Scotty steadily behind. On the fifth day they passed near Terry's Lake. Scotty knew the ground. The Ram was going east and would soon run into a lot of lumber camps; then turn he must, for the region was a box-cañon; there was only one way out. Scotty quit the trail and crossing northward to this one defile, down which the Ram must go, he waited. The West, the Chinook wind had been rising for an hour or more, the one damp wind of the Rockies, the Snow Wind of the Hills, and as it rose the flakes began to fly. In half an hour more it was a blinding snowstorm. Things twenty yards away were lost to view. But it did not last, the heaviest of it was over in a few minutes, and in two hours the skies were clear again. Scotty waited another hour, but seeing nothing he left his post and searched

about for sign; and found it, too, a dimpling row of tracks much hidden by the recent snow, but clear in one place under a ledge. The Ram had passed unseen, had given him the slip, saved by the storm wind and the snow.

Oh, Chinook! Mother West-wind! that brings the showers of spring and the snows of winter; that makes the grass grow on these great rolling uplands; that sustains the grass and all flesh that the grass sustains; that carved these uplands themselves, as well as made all things that live upon them, are you only a puff of air, or are you, as Greek and Indian both alike have taught, a something better, a living, thinking thing, that first creates then loves and guards its own? Why did you come that day and hold your muffler about the eyes of the wolfish human brute, if it were not that you meant he should not see or harm your splendid dear one as he passed.

And was there not purpose in the meeting of these very two, that you brought about long years ago, the day the Ram was born?

III

Now, Scotty thought there must be an object in the Ram's bold dash for the east side of the Flathead, and that object must be to reach the hills around Kintla Lake, on which he was well known and had many times been seen. He might keep west all day to-day, while the Chinook blew, but if the wind changed in the night he would surely turn eastward. So Scotty made no further attempt to keep the trail, or to make the west point of the Kintla Range, but cut straight northward over the divide toward the lake. The wind did change in the night. And next day, as Scotty scanned the vast expanse between him and the lake, he saw a moving speck below. He quickly got out of sight, then ran to intercept the traveller. But when he got to the spot he aimed at, and cautiously peered, there, 500 yards away, on the next ridge, he stood—the famous Ram. Each in plain view of the other.

Scotty stood for a minute and gazed in silence. Then, "Wal, old Krag, ye kin see the skull and cross-bones on my gun; I'm Death on yer track; ye can't shake me off; at any price, I mean to have them horns. And here's for luck." Then he raised the rifle and fired, but

the distance was great. The Ram stood till he saw the puff of smoke, then moved quickly to one side, and the snow was tossed by the ball not far from his former stand.

The Ram turned and made eastward, skirting the rugged southern shore of the lake, making for the main divide, and Scotty, left far behind for a time, trudged steadily, surely, behind him. For, added to his tireless strength, was the Saxon understreak of brutish grit, of senseless, pig-dogged pertinacity. The inflexible determination that still sticks to its purpose long after sense, reason, and honor have abandoned the attempt; that blinds its owner to his own defeat and makes him, even when he is downed, still feebly strike—yes! spend his final mite of strength in madly girding at his conqueror, whose quick response he knows will be to wipe him out.

It was on, on, all day. Then camp for the night and up again in the morning. Sometimes the trail was easy to follow, sometimes blotted out by new-fallen snow. But day after day they went; sometimes Scotty was in sight of the prize that he pertinaciously was hunting, but never very near. The Ram seemed to have learned that 500 yards was the farthest range of the rifle, and allowed the man to come

up to that, the safety limit. After a time it seemed as though he much preferred to have him there, for then he knew where he was. One time Scotty stole a march, and would have had a close shot had not the fateful West Wind borne the taint, and Krag was warned in time, but this was in the first month of that dogged, fearful following. After awhile the Ram was never out of sight.

Why did he not fly far away and baffle the hunter by his speed? *Because he must feed.* The man had his dried venison and chocolate, enough for many days, and when they were gone he could shoot a hare or a grouse, hastily cook it and travel all day on that, but the Ram required hours to seek the scanty grass under the snow. The long pursuit was telling on him. His eye was blazing bright as ever, his shapely corded limbs as certain in their stride, but his belly was pinching up, and hunger—weakening hunger—was joining with his other foe.

For five long weeks the chase went on, and the only respite to the Gunder Ram was when some snow-storm from the west would interpose its veil.

Then came two weeks when they were daily in sight of each other. In the morning Scotty, rising wolf-like from his frosty lair, would call

out, "Come, Krag, time we wuz a-movin'," and the Ram on the distant ridge would stamp defiantly, then setting his nose to the wind move on, now fast, now slow, but keeping ever the safe 500 yards or more ahead. When Scotty sat down to rest the Ram would graze. If Scotty hid the Ram would run in alarm to some place where near approach unseen would be impossible. If Scotty remained still for some time the Ram would watch him intently and as still as himself. Thus they went on, day after day, till ten eventless weeks dragged slowly by. A singular feeling had grown up between the two. The Ram became so used to the sleuthhound on his track that he accepted him as an inevitable, almost a necessary evil, and one day, when Scotty rose and scanned the northern distance for the Ram, he heard the long snort far behind, and turning, he saw old Krag impatiently waiting. The wind had changed and Krag had changed his route to suit. One day after their morning's start Scotty had a difficult two hours in crossing a stream over which old Krag had leaped. When he did reach the other side he heard a snort, and looked around to find that the Ram had come back to see what was keeping him.

Oh, Krag! Oh, Gunder Ram! Why do you make terms with such a foe implacable? Why play with Death? Have all the hundred warnings of the Mother Wind been sent in vain? Keep on, keep on; do your best that she may save you yet, but make no terms. Remember that the snow, which ought to save, may yet betray.

IV

Thus in the winter all the Chief Mountain was traversed. The Kootenay Rockies, spur by spur, right up to the Crow's Nest Pass, then westward in the face of the White Wind, the indomitable pair turned their steps, west and south, to the MacDonald Range. And onward still, till the Galtom Range was reached. Day by day the same old mechanical following, two dark moving specks on the great expanse of snow. Many a time their trail was crossed by that of other Sheep and other game. Once they met a party of miners who knew of Scotty and his hunt, and chaffed him now, but he stared blankly, heeded them not and went on. Many a time the Ram sought to hide his fateful footprints in the wake of some passing herd. But Scotty was not to be balked, his purpose had become his

nature; all puzzles he worked out, and now there were fewer interruptions of the chase, for the snow-storms seemed to cease, the White Wind held aloof, and Nature offered no rebuke.

On and on, still the same scant half-mile apart and on them both the hands of Time and Death seemed laid. Both were growing hollow-eyed and were gaunter every day. The man's hair had bleached since he set out on this insane pursuit, and the head and shoulders of the Ram were grizzling; only his jewel eyes and his splendid sweeping horns were the same, and borne as proudly as when first the chase began.

Each morning the man would rise stiff, half-frozen, and gaunt, but dogged as a very hound infernal, and shout across and Krag would respond, and springing into view from his own couch, the chase went on. Till in the third month, they crossed again from Galtom to Tobacco Range, then eastward back to Gunder Peak—the Ram and the sleuth inexorable, upon his trail behind him. Here, on the birthplace of the Ram, they sat one morning, at rest. The Ram on one ridge; Scotty 600 yards away on the next. For twelve long weeks the Ram had led him through the snow,

through ten long mountain-ranges—five hundred rugged miles.

And now they were back to their starting-point. Each with his lifetime wasted by one-half in that brief span. Scotty sat down and lit his pipe. The Ram made haste to graze. As long as the man stayed there in view the Ram would keep that ridge. Scotty knew this well; a hundred times he had proved it. Then as he sat and smoked, some evil spirit entered in and sketched a cunning plot. He emptied his pipe deliberately, put it away, then cut some rods of the low creeping birch behind him; he gathered some stones, and the great Ram watched afar. The man moved to the edge of the ridge and with sticks, some stones, and what clothing he could spare, he made a dummy of himself. Then keeping exactly behind it, he crawled backward over the ledge and disappeared. After an hour of crawling and stalking he came up on a ridge behind the Ram.

There he stood, majestic as a bull, graceful as a deer, with horns that rolled around his brow like thunder-clouds about a peak. He was gazing intently on the dummy, wondering why his follower was so long still. Scotty was nearly 300 yards away. Behind the Ram were some low rocks, but between was open snow.

Scotty lay down and threw snow on his own back till he was all whitened, then set out to crawl 200 yards, watching the great Ram's head and coming on as fast as he dared. Still old Krag stared at the dummy; sometimes impatiently stamping. Once he looked about sharply, and once he would have seen that deadly crawler in the snow, but that his horn itself, his great right horn, must interpose its breadth between his eye and his foe, and so his last small chance of escape was gone. Nearer, nearer to the sheltering rocks there crawled the Evil One. Then, safely reaching them at last, he rested, a scant half-hundred yards away. For the first time in his life he saw the famous horns quite close. He saw the great, broad shoulders, the curving neck, still massive, though the mark of famine was on all. He saw this splendid fellow-creature blow the hot breath of life from his nostrils, vibrant in the sun; and he even got a glimpse of the life-light in those glowing amber eyes, but he slowly raised the gun.

Oh, Mother White Wind, only blow! Let not this be. Is all your power offset? Are not a million idle tons of snow on every peak awaiting? And one, just one, will do; a single flying wreath of snow will save him yet. The

noblest living thing on all these hills, must he be stricken down to glut the basest lust of man?

But never day was calmer. Sometimes the mountain Magpies warn their friends; but not a bird was anywhere in view and still the Gunder Ram was spellbound watching that enemy, immovable across the dip.

Up went the gun that never failed—directed by the eye that never erred. But the hand that had never trembled taking twenty human lives, now shook as though in fear.

Two natures? Yes.

But the hand grew steady. The hunter's face was calm and hard. The rifle rang, and Scotty —hid his head. For the familiar "crack!" had sounded as it never did before. He heard a rattling on the distant stones, then a long-drawn "*snoof!*" But he neither looked nor moved. Two minutes later all was still, and he timidly raised his head. Was he gone? or what?

There on the snow lay a great gray-brown form, and at one end, like a twin-necked hydra coiling, were the horns, the wonderful horns, the sculptured record of the splendid life of a splendid creature, his fifteen years of life made visible at once. There were the points, much worn now, that once had won his Lamb-days' fight. There were the years of robust growth,

each long in measure of that growth; here was that year of sickness; there the splinter on the fifth year's ring, which notched his first love-fight. The points had now come round, and on them, could we but have seen, were the lives of many Gray Wolves that had sought his life. And so the rings read on, the living record of a life whose very preciousness had brought it to a sudden end.

The golden chain across the web of white was broken for its gold.

Scotty walked slowly over, and gazed in sullen silence, not at the dear-bought horns, but at the calm yellow eyes, unclosed and yet undimmed by death. Stone cold was he. He did not understand himself. He did not know that this was the sudden drop after the long, long slope up which he had been forcing himself for months. He sat down twenty yards away, with his back to the horns. He put a quid of tobacco in his mouth. But his mouth was dry. He spat it out again. He did not know what he himself felt. Words played but little part in his life, and his lips uttered only a torrent of horrid blasphemies, his only emotional outburst.

A long silence, then, "I'd give it back to him if I could."

He stared at the distance. His eyes fell on the coat he had left, and, realizing that he was cold, he walked across and gathered up his things. Then he returned to the horns, and over him came the wild, inhuman lusting for his victim's body, that he had heard his comrades speak of, but had never before understood. The reactionary lust that makes the panther fondle and caress the deer he has stricken down. He made a fire. Then feeling more like himself, he skinned the Ram's neck and cut off the head. This was familiar work and he followed it up mechanically, cutting meat enough to satisfy his hunger. Then bowing his shoulders beneath the weight of his massive trophy—a weight he could scarcely have noticed three months ago, he turned from the chase—old, emaciated, grizzled, and haggard—and toiled slowly down to the shanty he had left twelve weeks before.

V

"No! money couldn't buy it," and Scotty turned sullenly away to end discussion. He waited a week till the taxidermist had done his best, then he retraversed 300 miles of mountain to his lonely home. He removed the cover, and hung the head where it got the best light.

The work was well done, the horns were unchanged, the wonderful golden eyes were there, and when a glint of light gave to them a semblance of regard, the mountaineer felt once more some of the feelings of that day on the ridge. He covered up the head again.

Those who knew him best say he kept it covered and never spoke about it. But one man said, "Yes, I saw him uncover it once and look kind o' queer." The only remark he ever made about it was, "Them's my horns, but he'll get even with me yet."

Four years went by. Scotty, now known as old man Scotty, had never hunted since. He had broken himself down in that long madness. He lived now entirely by his gold pan, was quite alone and was believed to have something on his mind. One day late in the winter an old partner stopped at his shanty. Their hours of conversation did not amount to as many paragraphs.

"I heerd about ye killin' the Gunder Ram."

Scotty nodded.

"Let's see him, Scotty."

"Suit yourself," and the old man jerked his head toward the draped thing on the wall. The stranger pulled off the cloth and then followed the usual commonplace exclamations. Scotty

received them in silence. But he turned to look. The firelight reflected in the glassy eyes lent a red and angry glare.

"Kiver him up when you're through," said Scotty, and turned to his smoking.

"Say, Scotty, why don't ye sell him if he bothers ye that a way? That there New Yorker told me to tell ye that he'd give——"

"To hell with yer New Yorker. I'll niver sell him, I'll niver part with him. I stayed by him till I done him up, and he'll stay by me till he gets even. He's been a-gittin' back at me these four years. He broke me down on that trip. He's made an old man o' me. He's left me half luny. He's sucking my life out now, but he ain't through with me yet. There's more o' him round than that head. I tell ye when that old Chinook comes a-blowing up the Tobacco Creek, I've heerd noises that the wind don't make. I've heerd him just the same as I done that day when he blowed his life out through his nose, and me a-lyin' on my face afore him. I'm up ag'in' it, and I'm a-goin' to face it out—right—here—on—Tobacco Creek."

The White Wind rose high that night, and hissed and wailed about Scotty's shanty. Ordinarily, the stranger might not have noticed it. But once or twice there came in over the

door a long "*Snoof*" that jarred the latch and rustled violently the drapery of the head. Scotty glanced at his friend with a wild, scared look. No need for a word, the stranger's face was white.

In the morning it was snowing, but the stranger went his way. All that day the White Wind blew, and the snow came down harder and harder. Deeper and deeper it piled on everything. All the smaller peaks were rounded off with snow, and all the hollows of the higher ridges levelled. Still it came down, not drifting but piling up, heavy, soft, adhesive. All day long, deeper, heavier, rounder. As night came on, the Chinook blew yet harder. It skipped from peak to peak like a living thing, no puff of air, but a living thing as Greek and Indian both alike have taught, a being who creates, then loves and guards its own. It came like a mighty goddess, like an angry angel with a bugle horn, with a dreadful message from the far-off western sea. A message of war, for it sang a wild, triumphant battle-song, and the strain of the song was:

I am the mothering White Wind,
  This is my hour of might;
The hills and the snow are my children,
  My service they do to-night.

And here and there at the word received, there were mighty doings among the peaks. Here new effects were carven with a stroke. Here lakes were made or unmade; here messengers of life and death dispatched. An avalanche from Purcell's Peak went down to gash the sides, and show long veins of gold; another hurried, by the White Wind sent, to black a stream and turn its wasted waters to a thirsty land—a messenger of mercy. But down the Gunder Peak there whirled a monstrous mass, charged with a mission of revenge. Down, down, down, loud "snoofing" as it went, sliding from shoulder, ledge, and long incline, now wiping out a forest that would bar its path, then crashing, leaping, rolling, smashing over cliff and steep descent, still gaining as it sped. Down, down faster, fiercer in one fell and fearful rush, and Scotty's shanty, in its track, with all that it contained, was crushed and swiftly blotted out. The hunter had forefelt his doom. The Ram's own Mother, White Wind, from the western sea had come—had long delayed, but still had come at last.

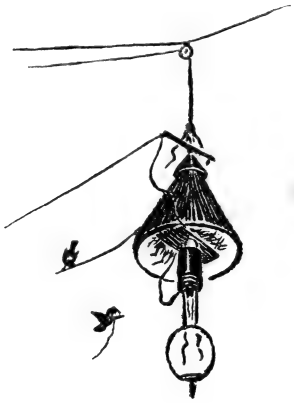
Over the rocky upland came the spring, over the level plain of Tobacco Creek. Gently the rains from the westward washed the great white

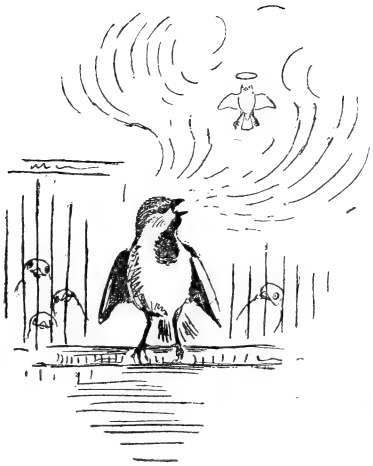
pile of the snowslide. Slowly the broken shanty came to light, and there in the middle, quite unharmed, was the head of the Gunder Ram. His amber eyes were gleaming bright as of old, under cover of those wonderful horns; and below him were some broken bones, with rags and grizzled human hair.

Old Scotty is forgotten, but the Ram's head hangs enshrined on a palace wall to-day, a treasure among kingly treasures; and men, when they gaze on those marvellous horns, still talk of the glorious Gunder Ram who grew them far away on the heights of the Kootenay.

RANDY: A STREET TROUBADOUR

BEING THE ADVENTURES OF A COCK SPARROW





RANDY: A STREET TROUBADOUR

BEING THE ADVENTURES OF A COCK SPARROW

I

SUCH a chirruping, such a twittering, and such a squirming, fluttering mass! Half a dozen English Sparrows rolling over and chattering around one another in the Fifth Avenue gutter, and in the middle of the mob, when it scattered somewhat, could be seen the cause of it all—a little Hen Sparrow, vigorously, indignantly defending herself against the crowd of noisy suitors. They seemed to be making love to her, but their methods were so rough they might have been a lynching party. They plucked, worried, and harried the indignant little lady in a manner utterly disgraceful, except that it was noticeable they did her no serious harm. She, however, laid about her with a will. Under no compulsion to spare her tormentors, apparently she would have slaughtered them all if she could.

It seemed clear that they were making love to her, but it seemed equally clear that she wanted none of them, and having partly convinced them of this at the point of her beak, she took advantage of a brief scattering of the assailants to fly up to the nearest eaves, displaying in one wing, as she went, some white feathers that afforded a mark to know her by, and may have been one of her chief charms.

II

A Cock Sparrow, in the pride of his black cravat and white collar-points, was hard at work building in a bird-house that some children had set on a pole in the garden for such as he. He was a singular Bird in several respects. The building-material that he selected was all twigs, that must have been brought from Madison or Union Square, and in the early morning he sometimes stopped work for a minute to utter a loud sweet song, much like that of a Canary.

It is not usual for a Cock Sparrow to build alone. But then this was an unusual Bird. After a week he had apparently finished the nest, for the bird-house was crammed to the very door with twigs purloined from the mu-

nicipal shade-trees. He had now more leisure for music, and astonished the people about by frequent rendering of his long, unsparrow-like ditty; and he might have gone down to history as an unaccountable mystery, but that a barber bird-fancier on Sixth Avenue supplied the missing chapters of his early life.

This man, it seems, had put a Sparrow's egg into the wicker basket-nest of his Canaries. The youngster had duly hatched, and had been trained by the foster-parents. Their specialty was song. He had the lungs and robustness of his own race. The Canaries had trained him well, and the result was a songster who made up in energy what he lacked in native talent. Strong and pugnacious, as well as musical, this vociferous roustabout had soon made himself master of the cage. He had no hesitation in hammering into silence a Canary that he could not put down by musical superiority, and after one of these little victories his strains were so unusually good that the barber had a stuffed Canary provided for the boisterous musician to vanquish whenever he wished to favor some visitor with Randy's exultant pæans of victory. He worried into silent subjection all of the Canaries he was caged with, and when finally kept by himself nothing angered him more than

to be near some voluble songster that he could neither silence nor get at. On these occasions he forgot his music, and his own Sparrow nature showed in the harsh *chirrup, chirrup* that has apparently been developed to make itself appreciated in the din of street traffic.

By the time his black bib had appeared he had made himself one of the chief characters and quite the chief attraction of the barber-shop. But one day the shelf on which the bird-cages stood gave way, all the cages were dashed to the floor, and in the general smash many of the Birds escaped. Among them was Randy, or, more properly, Bertrand, as this pugnacious songster was named after the famous Troubadour. The Canaries had voluntarily returned to their cages, or permitted themselves to be caught. But Randy hopped out of a back window, chirruped a few times, sang a defiant answer to the elevated-railway whistle, and keeping just out of reach of all attempts to capture him, he began to explore the brick wilderness about. He had not been a prisoner for generations. He readily accepted the new condition of freedom, and within a week was almost as wild as any of his kin, and had degenerated into a little street rowdy like the others, squabbling among them in the gutter, giving them

blow for blow, or surprising all hearers with occasional bursts of Canary music delivered with Sparrow energy.

III

This, then, was Randy, who had selected the bird-house for a nesting-place, and the reason for his intemperance in the matter of twigs is now clear. The only nest he had ever known was of basketwork; therefore a proper nest is made of twigs.

Within a few days Randy appeared with a mate. I might have forgotten the riot scene in the gutter, as such things are common, but that I now recognized in Randy's bride the little white-winged Biddy Sparrow that had caused it.

She had apparently accepted Randy, but she was still putting on airs, pecking at him when he came near. He was squirming around with drooping wings and tilted tail, chirping like any other ardent Cock Sparrow, but occasionally stopping to show off his Canary accomplishment.

Any objections she may have had were apparently overcome, possibly by this astonishing display of genius, and he escorted her to the

ready-made nest, running in ahead to show the way, and hopping proudly, noisily, officiously about her. She followed him, but came out again quickly, with Randy after her chirping and beseeching. He chattered a long time before he could persuade her to reënter, but again she came out immediately, this time sputtering and scolding. Again he seemed to exert his power of persuasion, and finally she went in chattering, reappeared with a twig in her bill, dropped it, and flew away out of sight. Randy came out. All his joy and pride in his house were gone. This was a staggering blow, when he had looked for unmitigated commendation. He sat disconsolately on the door-step for a minute, and chirruped in a way that probably meant, "Come back, come back!" But his bride did not come. He turned into the house. There was a scratching sound, and he came out at once with a large stick and flung it from the door to the ground. He returned for another, sent that flying after the first, and so went on, dragging out and hurling down all the sticks he had so carefully and laboriously carried in. That wonderful forked one that had given so much trouble to get here from Union Square, and those two smooth ones, just like the ones in his foster-mother's nest—

all, all must go. For over an hour he toiled away in silence and alone. Then, apparently, he had ended his task, for on the ground below was a pile of sticks, as big as a bonfire, the labor of a week undone. Randy glared fiercely at them and at the empty house, gave a short, harsh chirp, probably a Sparrow bad word, then flew away.

Next day he reappeared with Biddy, fussing about her in passerine exuberance once more, and chirping as he led her to the door again. She hopped in, then out, looked aslant at the twigs below, went back in, reappeared with a very small twig that had been overlooked, dropped it, and with evident satisfaction watched it fall on the pile below. After running in and out a dozen times they set off together, and presently returned, Biddy with her bill full of hay, Randy with one straw. These were carried in and presumably arranged satisfactorily. Then they went for more hay, and having got Randy set right, she remained in the box to arrange the hay as he brought it, only occasionally going for a load when he was long in coming. It was marvellous to see how the chivalry in this aggressive musician was reducing him to subjection. It seemed a good opportunity to try their tastes. I put out thirty short strings

and ribbons in a row on a balcony near. Fifteen were common strips, eight were gaudy strips, and seven were bright silk ribbons. Every other one in the row was a dull string. Biddy was the first to see this array of material. She flew down, looked over it, around it, left eye, right eye; then decided to let it alone. But Randy came closer; he was not unfamiliar with threads. He hopped this way, then that, pulled at a thread, started back, but came nearer, nibbled at one or two, then made a dart at a string and bore it away. Next time Biddy came, and each bore off a string. They took only the dull ones, but after these were gone Biddy selected some of the brighter material, though even she did not venture on the gaudiest ribbons, and Randy would have no hand in bringing home any but the soberest and most stick-like materials. The nest was now half done. Randy once more ventured to carry in a stick, but a moment later it was whirling down to the pile below, with Biddy triumphantly gazing after it. Poor Randy! no toleration for *his* hobby—all those splendid sticks wasted. His mother had had a stick nest,—a beautiful nest it was,—but he was overruled. Nothing but straw now; then, not sticks, but softer material. He submitted—liberty had brought daily lessons of submission.

He used to think that the barber-shop was the whole world, and himself the most important living being. But of late both these ideas had been badly shaken. Biddy found that his education had been sadly neglected in all useful matters, and in each new kind of material she had to instruct him anew.

When the nest was two-thirds finished, Biddy, whose ideas were quite luxurious, began to carry in large soft feathers. But now Randy thought this was going too far. He must draw the line somewhere. He drew it at feather beds. His earliest cradle had had no such lining. He proceeded to bundle out the objectionable feather bedding, and Biddy, returning with a new load, was just in time to see the first lot float downward from the door to join the stick pile below. She fluttered after them, seized them in the air, and returned to meet her lord coming out of the door with more of the obnoxious plumes, and there they stood, glaring at each other, chattering their loudest, their mouths full of feathers, and their hearts full of indignation.

How is it that when it is a question of home furnishing we sympathize with the female? I felt that Biddy had first right, and in the end she got her way. First there was a stormy time

in which quantities of feathers were carried in and out of the house, or wind-borne about the garden. Then there was a lull, and next day all the feathers were carried back to the nest. Just how they arranged the matter will never be known, but it is sure that Randy himself did the greater part of the work, and never stopped till the box was crammed with the largest and softest of feathers. During all this they were usually together, but one day Biddy went off and stayed for some time. Randy looked about, chirruped, got no answer, looked up, then down, and far below he saw the pile of sticks that he had toiled to bring. Those dear sticks, just like the home of his early days! Randy fluttered down. There was the curious forked one still. The temptation was irresistible. Randy picked it up and hurried to the nest, then in. It had always been a difficult twig to manage—that side prong would catch at the door; but he had carried it so often now that he knew how. After half a minute's delay inside, while he was placing it, I suppose, he came out again, looked perkily about, preened and shook himself, then sang his Canary song from beginning to end several times, tried some new bars, and seemed extremely happy. When Biddy came with more feathers,

Randy Drew the Line at Feather Beds.

he assiduously helped her to place them inside, and then the nest was finished. Two days later I got up to the nest, and in it found one egg. The Sparrows saw me go up, but did not fly chattering about my head, as do most Birds. They flew away to a distance, and watched anxiously from the shelter of some chimneys.

The third day there was a great commotion in the box, a muffled scuffling and chattering, and once or twice a tail appeared at the door as though the owner were trying to back out. Then it seemed that something was being dragged about. At length the owner of the tail came out far enough to show that it was Biddy; but, apparently, she was pulled in again. Evidently a disgraceful family brawl was on. It was quite unaccountable, until finally Biddy struggled out of the door, dragging Randy's pet twig to throw it contemptuously on the ground below. She had discovered it in the bedding where he had hidden it; hence the row. But I do not see how she could drag it out when he was resisting. I suspect that he really weakened for the sake of peace. In the scuffle and general upset the egg—their first arrival—was unfortunately tumbled out with the stick, and fell down to lie below, in porcelain fragments, on a wet yellow back-

ground. The Sparrows did not seem to trouble about the remains. Having dropped from the nest, it had dropped out of their world.

IV

After this the pair got along peaceably for several days. Egg after egg was added to the nest. In a week there were five, and the two seemed now to be quite happy together. Randy sang to the astonishment of all the neighborhood, and Biddy carried in more feathers as though preparing to set and anticipating a blizzard. But about this time it occurred to me to try a little experiment with the pair. Watching my chance, late one evening, I dropped a marble into the luxurious nest. What happened at once I do not know, but early the next morning I was out on Fifth Avenue near the corner of Twenty-first Street. It was Sunday. The street was very quiet, but a ring of perhaps a dozen people were standing gazing at something in the gutter. As I came near I heard occasional chirruping, and getting a view into the ring, I saw two Sparrows locked in fierce combat, chirruping a little, but hammering and pecking away in deadly earnest. They scuffled around, regardless of the

bystanders, for some time; but when at length they paused for breath, and sat back on their tails and heels to gasp, I was quite shocked to recognize Biddy and Randy. After another round they were shooed away by one of the onlookers, who evidently disapproved of Sunday brawling. They then flew to the nearest roof to go on as before. That afternoon I found below the nest not only the intrusive marble, but also the remains of the five eggs, all alike thrown out, and I suspect that the presence of that curious hard round egg in the nest, and the obvious implication, were the cause of the brawl.

Whether Biddy had been able to explain it or not I do not know, but it seemed that the couple decided to forget the past and begin again. There was evidently neither luck nor peace in that bird-box, so they abandoned it, feathers and all; and Biddy, whose ideas were distinctly original, selected the site this time, nothing less than the top of an electric lamp in the middle of Madison Square. All week they labored, and in spite of a high wind most of the time, they finished they nest. It is hard to see how the Birds could sleep at night with that great glaring buzzing light under their noses. Still, Biddy seemed pleased, Randy was learning to

suppress his own opinion, and all would have gone well but that before that first egg was laid the carbon-points of the light burned out and the man who put in the new ones thought proper to consign remorselessly the whole of the Biddy-Randy mansion to the garbage-can. A Robin or a Swallow might have felt this a crushing blow, but there is no limit to a Sparrow's energy and hopefulness. Evidently it was the wrong kind of a nest. Probably the material was at fault. At any rate, a radical change would be much better. After embezzling some long straws from the nest of an absent neighbor, Biddy laid them in the high fork of an elm-tree in Madison Square Park, by way of letting Randy know that this was the place now selected; and Randy, having learned by this time that it was less trouble to accept her decision than to offer an opinion of his own, sang a Canary trill on two chirps, and set about rummaging in the garbage-heaps for choice building-material, winking hard and looking the other way when a nice twig presented itself.

V

On the other side of the Square was the nest of a pair of very unpopular Sparrows. The male bird in particular had made himself thoroughly disliked. He was a big, handsome fellow with an enormous black cravat, but an out-and-out bully. Might is right in Sparrow-world. Their causes for quarrel are food, mates, quarters, and nesting-material—pretty much as with ourselves. This arrogant little Bird, by reason of his strength, had the mate of his choice and the best nesting-site, and was adding to it all the most admired material in the Square. My Sparrows had avoided the gaudy ribbons I offered. They were not educated up to that pitch, but they certainly had their æsthetic preferences. A few Guinea-fowl feathers that originally came from Central Park Menagerie had been stolen from one nest to another, till now they rested in the sumptuous home with which Cravat and his wife had embellished one of the marble capitals of the new bank. The Bully did much as he pleased in the Park, and one day, on hearing Randy's song, flew at him. Randy had been a terror among Canaries, but against Cravat he had but little chance. He did his best, but was de-

feated, and took refuge in flight. Puffed up by this victory, the Bully flew to Randy's new nest, and after a more or less scornful scrutiny proceeded to drag out some strings that he thought he might use at home. Randy had been worsted, but the sight of this pillage roused the doughty Troubadour again, and he flew at the Bully as before. From the branches they tumbled to the ground. Other Sparrows joined in, and, shame to tell! they joined with the big fellow against the comparative stranger. Randy was getting very roughly handled, feathers began to float away, when into the ring flashed a little Hen Sparrow with white wing-feathers, chirrup, chirrup, wallop, wallop, she went into it. Oh, how she did lay about her! The Sparrows that had joined in for fun now went off: there was no longer any fun in it, nothing but hard pecks, and the tables were completely turned on Cravat. He quickly lost heart, then, and fled toward his own quarter of the Square, with Biddy holding on to his tail like a little bulldog; and there she continued to hang till the feather came out by the roots, and she afterward had the satisfaction of working it into the coarser make-up of her nest along with the rescued material. It is hardly possible that Sparrows have refined ideas of

justice and retribution, but it is sure that things which look like it do crop up among them. Within two days the Guinea-fowl feathers that had so long been the chief glory of the Cravat's nest now formed part of the furnishing of Biddy's new abode, and none had the temerity to dispute her claim.

It was now late in the season, feathers were scarce, and Biddy could not find enough for the lining that she was so particular about. But she found a substitute that appealed to her love of the novel. In the Square was the cab-stand, and scattering near were usually more or less horsehairs. These seemed to be good and original linings. A most happy thought, and with appropriate enthusiasm the ever-hopeful couple set about gathering horsehairs, two or three at a time. Possibly the nest of a Chipping Sparrow in one of the parks gave them the idea. The Chippy always lines with horsehair, and gets an admirable spring-mattress effect by curling the hair round and round the inside of the nest. The result is good, but one must know how to get it. It would have been well had the Sparrows learned how to handle the hair. When a Chippy picks up a horsehair to bring home it takes only one at a time, and is careful to lift it by the end, for the harmless-

looking hair is not without its dangers. The Sparrows had no notion of handling it except as they did the straw. Biddy seized a hair near the middle, found it somewhat long, so took a second hold, several inches away. In most cases this made a great loop in the hair over her head or beyond her beak. But it was a convenient way to manage, and at first no mischief came, though Chippy, had she seen, might well have shuddered at the idea of that threatening noose.

It was the last day of the lining. Biddy had in some way given Randy to understand that no more hair was needed, and, proud and bustling, she was adding a few finishing touches and a final hair while he was trying some new variations of his finest bars on top of Farragut's head, when a loud alarm chirrup from Biddy caught his ear. He looked toward the new home to see her struggling up and down without apparent reason, and yet unable to get more than her length away from the nest. She had at last put her head through one of those dangerous hair nooses, made by herself, and by mischance had tightened and twisted it so that she was caught. The more she struggled and twisted the tighter became the noose. Randy now discovered that he was deeply attached to

this wilful little termagant. He became greatly excited, and flew about chattering. He tried to release her by pulling at her foot, but that only made matters worse. All their efforts were in vain. Several new kinks were added to the hair. Other hairs from the nest seemed to join in the plot, and, tangled and intermeshed, they tightened even more, till the group of wondering, upturned child faces in the Park below were centred on a tousled feathery form hanging still and silent in the place of the bustling, noisy, energetic Biddy Sparrow.

Poor Randy seemed deeply distressed. The neighbor Sparrows had come at the danger-call note, and joined heir cries with his, but had not been able to help the victim. Now they went off to their own squabbles and troubles, and Randy hopped about chirping or sat still with drooping wings. It was long before he realized that she was dead, and all that day he exerted himself to interest her and make her join in their usual life. At night he rested alone in one of the trees, and at gray dawn was bustling about, singing occasionally and chirruping around the nest, from whose rim, in the fateful horsehair, hung Biddy, stiff and silent now.

VI

Randy had never been an alert Sparrow. His Canary training had really handicapped him. He was venturesome and heedless with carriages as well as with children. This peculiarity was greatly increased by his present preoccupation, and while foraging somewhat listlessly on Madison Avenue, that afternoon, a messenger-boy on a wheel came silently up, and before Randy realized his danger, the wheel was on his tail. As he struggled to get away, even at the price of his tail, his right wing flashed under the hind wheel, and then he was crippled. The boy rode on, and Randy managed to flutter and hop away toward the sheltering trees. A little girl, assisted by her small dog, captured the cripple, after an exciting chase among the benches. She took him home, and moved by what her brothers considered sadly misplaced tenderness, she caged and nursed him. When he began to recover, he one day surprised them by singing his Canary song.

This created quite a stir in the household. In time a newspaper reporter heard of it. The inevitable write-up followed, and this met the eye of the Sixth Avenue barber. He came

with many witnesses to claim his bird, and at length his claim was allowed.

So Randy is once more in a cage, carefully watched and fed, the central figure in a small world, and not at all unhappy. After all, he was never a truly wild Bird. It was an accident that set him free originally. An accident had mated him with Biddy. Their brief life together had been a succession of storms and accidents. An accident had taken her away, and another accident had renewed his cage life. This life, comparatively calm and uneventful, has given him an opportunity to cultivate his musical gifts, for he is in a very conservatory of music, and close at hand are his old tutors and foster-parents.

Sometimes when left alone he amuses himself by beginning a rude nest of sticks, but he looks guilty, and leaves that corner of the cage when any one comes near. If a few feathers are given him they are worked into the nest at first, but next morning are invariably found on the floor below. These persistent attempts at nesting suggested that he wanted a mate, and several were furnished on approval, but the result was not happy. Prompt interference was needed each time to prevent bloodshed and to rescue the intended bride. So the

attempt was given up. Evidently this Troubadour wants no new lady-love. His songs seem to be rather of war, for the barber has discovered that when he wishes to provoke Randy into his most rapturous musical expression it is only necessary to let him demolish, not the effigy of a Canary, but a stuffed Cock Sparrow. And on these occasions Randy develops an enthusiasm almost amounting to inspiration if the dummy have a very well marked black patch on the throat.

This, however, is mere by-play. All his best energies are devoted to song. And if you stumble on the right barber-shop you may see this energetic recluse, forgetting the cares, joys, and sorrows of active life in his devotion to music, like some monk who has tried the world, found it too hard for him, and has gladly returned to his cell, there to devote the rest of his days to purely spiritual pleasures.

JOHNNY BEAR

JOHNNY BEAR

I

JOHNNY was a queer little Bear cub that lived with Grumpy, his mother, in the Yellowstone Park. They were among the many bears that found a desirable home in the country about the Fountain Hotel.

The steward of the Hotel had ordered the kitchen garbage to be dumped in an open glade of the surrounding forest, thus providing throughout the season, a daily feast for the Bears, and their numbers have increased each year since the law of the land has made the Park a haven of refuge where no wild thing may be harmed. They have accepted man's peace-offering, and many of them have become so well known to the Hotel men that they have received names suggested by their looks or ways. Slim Jim was a very long-legged thin Blackbear; Snuffy was a Blackbear that looked as though he had been singed; Fatty was a very fat, lazy Bear that always lay down to eat; the Twins were two half-grown, ragged speci-

mens that always came and went together. But Grumpy and Little Johnny were the best known of them all.

Grumpy was the biggest and fiercest of the Blackbears, and Johnny, apparently her only son, was a peculiarly tiresome little cub, for he seemed never to cease either grumbling or whining. This probably meant that he was sick, for a healthy little Bear does not grumble all the time, any more than a healthy child. And indeed Johnny looked sick; he was the most miserable specimen in the Park. His whole appearance suggested dyspepsia; and this I quite understood when I saw the awful mixtures he would eat at that garbage-heap. Anything at all that he fancied he would try. And his mother allowed him to do as he pleased; so, after all, it was chiefly her fault, for she should not have permitted such things.

Johnny had only three good legs, his coat was faded and mangy, his limbs were thin, and his ears and paunch were disproportionately large. Yet his mother thought the world of him. She was evidently convinced that he was a little beauty and the Prince of all Bears, so, of course, she quite spoiled him. She was always ready to get into trouble on his account, and he was always delighted to lead her there. Al-

though such a wretched little failure, Johnny was far from being a fool, for he usually knew just what he wanted and how to get it, if teasing his mother could carry the point.

II

It was in the summer of 1897 that I made their acquaintance. I was in the Park to study the home life of the animals, and had been told that in the woods, near the Fountain Hotel, I could see Bears at any time, which, of course, I scarcely believed. But on stepping out of the back door five minutes after arriving, I came face to face with a large Blackbear and her two cubs.

I stopped short, not a little startled. The Bears also stopped and sat up to look at me. Then Mother Bear made a curious short *Koff Koff*, and looked toward a near pine-tree. The cubs seemed to know what she meant, for they ran to this tree and scrambled up like two little monkeys, and when safely aloft they sat like small boys, holding on with their hands, while their little black legs dangled in the air, and waited to see what was to happen down below.

The Mother Bear, still on her hind legs, came slowly toward me, and I began to feel very

uncomfortable indeed, for she stood about six feet high in her stockings and had apparently never heard of the magical power of the human eye.

I had not even a stick to defend myself with, and when she gave a low growl, I was about to retreat to the Hotel, although previously assured that the Bears have always kept their truce with man. However, just at this turning-point the old one stopped, now but thirty feet away, and continued to survey me calmly. She seemed in doubt for a minute, but evidently made up her mind that, "although that human thing might be all right, she would take no chances for her little ones."

She looked up to her two hopefuls, and gave a peculiar whining *Er-r-r Er-r*, whereupon they, like obedient children, jumped, as at the word of command. There was nothing about them heavy or bear-like as commonly understood; lightly they swung from bough to bough till they dropped to the ground, and all went off together into the woods. I was much tickled by the prompt obedience of the little Bears. As soon as their mother told them to do something they did it. They did not even offer a suggestion. But I also found out that there was a good reason for it, for had they not

done as she had told them they would have got such a spanking as would have made them howl.

This was a delightful peep into Bear home life, and would have been well worth coming for, if the insight had ended there. But my friends in the Hotel said that that was not the best place for Bears. I should go to the garbage-heap, a quarter-mile off in the forest. There, they said, I surely could see as many Bears as I wished (which was absurd of them).

Early the next morning I went to this Bears' Banqueting Hall in the pines, and hid in the nearest bushes.

Before very long a large Blackbear came quietly out of the woods to the pile, and began turning over the garbage and feeding. He was very nervous, sitting up and looking about at each slight sound, or running away a few yards when startled by some trifle. At length he cocked his ears and galloped off into the pines, as another Blackbear appeared. He also behaved in the same timid manner, and at last ran away when I shook the bushes in trying to get a better view.

At the outset I myself had been very nervous, for of course no man is allowed to carry weapons in the Park; but the timidity of these

Bears reassured me, and thenceforth I forgot everything in the interest of seeing the great, shaggy creatures in their home life.

Soon I realized I could not get the close insight I wished from that bush, as it was seventy-five yards from the garbage-pile. There was none nearer; so I did the only thing left to do: I went to the garbage-pile itself, and, digging a hole big enough to hide in, remained there all day long, with cabbage-stalks, old potato-peelings, tomato-cans, and carrion piled up in odorous heaps around me. Notwithstanding the opinions of countless flies, it was not an attractive place. Indeed, it was so unfragrant that at night, when I returned to the Hotel, I was not allowed to come in until after I had changed my clothes in the woods.

It had been a trying ordeal, but I surely did see Bears that day. If I may reckon it a new Bear each time one came, I must have seen over forty. But of course it was not, for the Bears were coming and going. And yet I am certain of this: there were at least thirteen Bears, for I had thirteen about me at one time.

All that day I used my sketch-book and journal. Every Bear that came was duly noted; and this process soon began to give the desired insight into their ways and personalities.

Many unobservant persons think and say that all Negroes, or all Chinamen, as well as all animals of a kind, look alike. But just as surely as each human being differs from the next, so surely each animal is different from its fellow; otherwise how would the old ones know their mates or the little ones their mother, as they certainly do? These feasting Bears gave a good illustration of this, for each had its individuality; no two were quite alike in appearance or in character.

This curious fact also appeared: I could hear the Woodpeckers pecking over one hundred yards away in the woods, as well as the Chickadees chickadeeing, the Blue-jays blue-jaying, and even the Squirrels scampering across the leafy forest floor; and yet I *did not hear one of these Bears come.* Their huge, padded feet always went down in exactly the right spot to break no stick, to rustle no leaf, showing how perfectly they had learned the art of going in silence through the woods.

III

All morning the Bears came and went or wandered near my hiding-place without discovering me; and, except for one or two brief quarrels, there was nothing very exciting to

note. But about three in the afternoon it became more lively.

There were then four large Bears feeding on the heap. In the middle was Fatty, sprawling at full length as he feasted, a picture of placid ursine content, puffing just a little at times as he strove to save himself the trouble of moving by darting out his tongue like a long red serpent, farther and farther, in quest of the tidbits just beyond claw reach.

Behind him Slim Jim was puzzling over the anatomy and attributes of an ancient lobster. It was something outside his experience, but the principle, "In case of doubt take the trick," is well known in Bearland, and settled the difficulty.

The other two were clearing out fruit-tins with marvellous dexterity. One supple paw would hold the tin while the long tongue would dart again and again through the narrow opening, avoiding the sharp edges, yet cleaning out the can to the last taste of its sweetness.

This pastoral scene lasted long enough to be sketched, but was ended abruptly. My eye caught a movement on the hilltop whence all the Bears had come, and out stalked a very large Blackbear with a tiny cub. It was Grumpy and Little Johnny.

The old Bear stalked down the slope toward the feast, and Johnny hitched alongside, grumbling as he came, his mother watching him as solicitously as ever a hen did her single chick. When they were within thirty yards of the garbage-heap, Grumpy turned to her son and said something which, judging from its effect, must have meant: "Johnny, my child, I think you had better stay here while I go and chase those fellows away."

Johnny obediently waited; but he wanted to *see*, so he sat up on his hind legs with eyes agog and ears acock.

Grumpy came striding along with dignity, uttering warning growls as she approached the four Bears. They were too much engrossed to pay any heed to the fact that yet another one of them was coming, till Grumpy, now within fifteen feet, let out a succession of loud coughing sounds, and charged into them. Strange to say, they did not pretend to face her, but, as soon as they saw who it was, scattered and all fled for the woods.

Slim Jim could safely trust his heels, and the other two were not far behind; but poor Fatty, puffing hard and waddling like any other very fat creature, got along but slowly, and, unluckily for him, he fled in the direction of Johnny,

so that Grumpy overtook him in a few bounds and gave him a couple of sound slaps in the rear which, if they did not accelerate his pace, at least made him bawl, and saved him by changing his direction. Grumpy, now left alone in possession of the feast, turned toward her son and uttered the whining *Er-r-r Er-r-r Er-r-r-r.* Johnny responded eagerly. He came "hopity-hop" on his three good legs as fast as he could, and, joining her on the garbage, they began to have such a good time that Johnny actually ceased grumbling.

He had evidently been there before now, for he seemed to know quite well the staple kinds of canned goods. One might almost have supposed that he had learned the brands, for a lobster-tin had no charm for him as long as he could find those that once were filled with jam. Some of the tins gave him much trouble, as he was too greedy or too clumsy to escape being scratched by the sharp edges. One seductive fruit-tin had a hole so large that he found he could force his head into it, and for a few minutes his joy was full as he licked into all the farthest corners. But when he tried to draw his head out, his sorrows began, for he found himself caught. He could not get out, and he scratched and screamed like any other spoiled

child, giving his mother no end of concern, although she seemed not to know how to help him. When at length he got the tin off his head, he revenged himself by hammering it with his paws till it was perfectly flat.

A large sirup-can made him happy for a long time. It had had a lid, so that the hole was round and smooth; but it was not big enough to admit his head, and he could not touch its riches with his tongue stretched out its longest. He soon hit on a plan, however. Putting in his little black arm, he churned it around, then drew out and licked it clean; and while he licked one he got the other one ready; and he did this again and again, until the can was as clean inside as when first it had left the factory.

A broken mouse-trap seemed to puzzle him. He clutched it between his fore-paws, their strong inturn being sympathetically reflected in his hind feet, and held it firmly for study. The cheesy smell about it was decidedly good, but the thing responded in such an uncanny way, when he slapped it, that he kept back a cry for help only by the exercise of unusual self-control. After gravely inspecting it, with his head first on this side and then on that, and his lips puckered into a little tube, he submit-

ted it to the same punishment as that meted out to the refractory fruit-tin, and was rewarded by discovering a nice little bit of cheese in the very heart of the culprit.

Johnny had evidently never heard of ptomaïne poisoning, for nothing came amiss. After the jams and fruits gave out he turned his attention to the lobster- and sardine-cans, and was not appalled by even the army beef. His paunch grew quite balloon-like, and from much licking his arms looked thin and shiny, as though he was wearing black silk gloves.

IV

It occurred to me that I might now be in a really dangerous place. For it is one thing surprising a Bear that has no family responsibilities, and another stirring up a bad-tempered old mother by frightening her cub.

"Supposing," I thought, "that cranky Little Johnny should wander over to this end of the garbage and find me in the hole; he will at once set up a squall, and his mother, of course, will think I am hurting him, and, without giving me a chance to explain, may forget the rules of the Park and make things very unpleasant."

Luckily, all the jam-pots were at Johnny's end; he stayed by them, and Grumpy stayed by him. At length he noticed that his mother had a better tin than any he could find, and as he ran whining to take it from her he chanced to glance away up the slope. There he saw something that made him sit up and utter a curious little *Koff Koff Koff Koff*.

His mother turned quickly, and sat up to see "what the child was looking at." I followed their gaze, and there, oh horrors! was an enormous Grizzly Bear. He was a monster; he looked like a fur-clad omnibus coming through the trees.

Johnny set up a whine at once and got behind his mother. She uttered a deep growl, and all her back hair stood on end. Mine did too, but I kept as still as possible.

With stately tread the Grizzly came on. His vast shoulders sliding along his sides, and his silvery robe swaying at each tread, like the trappings on an elephant, gave an impression of power that was appalling.

Johnny began to whine more loudly, and I fully sympathized with him now, though I did not join in. After a moment's hesitation Grumpy turned to her noisy cub and said something that sounded to me like two or

three short coughs—*Koff Koff Koff.* But I imagine that she really said: "My child, I think you had better get up that tree, while I go and drive the brute away."

At any rate, that was what Johnny did, and this what she set out to do. But Johnny had no notion of missing any fun. He wanted to *see* what was going to happen. So he did not rest contented where he was hidden in the thick branches of the pine, but combined safety with view by climbing to the topmost branch that would bear him, and there, sharp against the sky, he squirmed about and squealed aloud in his excitement. The branch was so small that it bent under his weight, swaying this way and that as he shifted about, and every moment I expected to see it snap off. If it had been broken when swaying my way, Johnny would certainly have fallen on me, and this would probably have resulted in bad feelings between myself and his mother; but the limb was tougher than it looked, or perhaps Johnny had had plenty of experience, for he neither lost his hold nor broke the branch.

Meanwhile, Grumpy stalked out to meet the Grizzly. She stood as high as she could and set all her bristles on end; then, growling and chopping her teeth, she faced him.

But Johnny Wanted to See.

The Grizzly, so far as I could see, took no notice of her. He came striding toward the feast as though alone. But when Grumpy got within twelve feet of him she uttered a succession of short, coughy roars, and, charging, gave him a tremendous blow on the ear. The Grizzly was surprised; but he replied with a left-hander that knocked her over like a sack of hay.

Nothing daunted, but doubly furious, she jumped up and rushed at him.

Then they clinched and rolled over and over, whacking and pounding, snorting and growling, and making no end of dust and rumpus. But above all their noise I could clearly hear Little Johnny, yelling at the top of his voice, and evidently encouraging his mother to go right in and finish the Grizzly at once.

Why the Grizzly did not break her in two I could not understand. After a few minutes' struggle, during which I could see nothing but dust and dim flying legs, the two separated as by mutual consent,—perhaps the regulation time was up,—and for a while they stood glaring at each other, Grumpy at least much winded.

The Grizzly would have dropped the matter right there. He did not wish to fight. He had

no idea of troubling himself about Johnny. All he wanted was a quiet meal. But no! The moment he took one step toward the garbage-pile, that is, as Grumpy thought, toward Johnny, she went at him again. But this time the Grizzly was ready for her. With one blow he knocked her off her feet and sent her crashing on to a huge upturned pine-root. She was fairly staggered this time. The force of the blow, and the rude reception of the rooty antlers, seemed to take all the fight out of her. She scrambled over and tried to escape. But the Grizzly was mad now. He meant to punish her, and dashed around the root. For a minute they kept up a dodging chase about it; but Grumpy was quicker of foot, and somehow always managed to keep the root between herself and her foe, while Johnny, safe in the tree, continued to take an intense and uproarious interest.

At length, seeing he could not catch her that way, the Grizzly sat up on his haunches; and while he doubtless was planning a new move, old Grumpy saw her chance, and making a dash, got away from the root and up to the top of the tree where Johnny was perched.

Johnny came down a little way to meet her, or perhaps so that the tree might not break off

with the additional weight. Having photographed this interesting group from my hiding-place, I thought I must get a closer picture at any price, and for the first time in the day's proceedings I jumped out of the hole and ran under the tree. This move proved a great mistake, for here the thick lower boughs came between, and I could see nothing at all of the Bears at the top.

I was close to the trunk, and was peering about and seeking for a chance to use the camera, when old Grumpy began to come down, chopping her teeth and uttering her threatening cough at me. While I stood in doubt, I heard a voice far behind me calling:

"Say, Mister! You better look out; that ole B'ar is liable to hurt you."

I turned to see the cow-boy of the Hotel on his Horse. He had been riding after the cattle, and chanced to pass near just as events were moving quickly.

"Do you know these Bears?" said I, as he rode up.

"Wall, I reckon I do," said he. "That there little one up top is Johnny; he's a little crank. An' the big un is Grumpy; she's a big crank. She's mighty onreliable gen'relly, but she's al-

ways strictly ugly when Johnny hollers like that."

"I should much like to get her picture when she comes down," said I.

"Tell ye what I'll do. I'll stay by on the pony, an' if she goes to bother you I reckon I can keep her off," said the man.

He accordingly stood by as Grumpy slowly came down from branch to branch, growling and threatening. But when she neared the ground she kept on the far side of the trunk, and finally slipped down and ran into the woods, without the slightest pretence of carrying out any of her dreadful threats. Thus Johnny was again left alone. He climbed up to his old perch and resumed his monotonous whining.

Wah! Wah! Wah! ("Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!")

I got the camera ready, and was arranging deliberately to take his picture in his favorite and peculiar attitude for threnodic song, when all at once he began craning his neck and yelling, as he had done during the fight.

I looked where his nose pointed, and here was the Grizzly coming on straight toward me —not charging, but striding along, as though he meant to come the whole distance.

I said to my cow-boy friend: "Do you know this Bear?"

He replied: "Wall! I reckon I do! That's the ole Grizzly. He's the biggest B'ar in the Park. He gen'relly minds his own business, but he ain't scared o' nothin'; an' to-day, ye see, he's been scrappin', so he's liable to be ugly."

"I would like to take his picture," said I; "and if you will help me, I am willing to take some chances on it."

"All right," said he, with a grin. "I'll stand by on the Horse, an' if he charges you I'll charge him; an' I kin knock him down once, but I can't do it twice. You better have your tree picked out."

As there was only one tree to pick out, and that was the one that Johnny was in, the prospect was not alluring. I imagined myself scrambling up there next to Johnny, and then Johnny's mother coming up after me, with the Grizzly below to catch me when Grumpy should throw me down.

The Grizzly came on, and I snapped him at forty yards, then again at twenty yards; and still he came quietly toward me. I sat down on the garbage and made ready. Eighteen yards — sixteen yards — twelve yards — eight

yards, and still he came, while the pitch of Johnny's protests kept rising proportionately. Finally at five yards he stopped, and swung his huge bearded head to one side, to see what was making that aggravating row in the tree-top, giving me a profile view, and I snapped the camera. At the click he turned on me with a thunderous

G—R—O—W—L!

and I sat still and trembling, wondering if my last moment had come. For a second he glared at me, and I could note the little green electric lamp in each of his eyes. Then he slowly turned and picked up—a large tomato-can.

"Goodness!" I thought, "is he going to throw that at me?" But he deliberately licked it out, dropped it, and took another, paying thenceforth no heed whatever either to me or to Johnny, evidently considering us equally beneath his notice.

I backed slowly and respectfully out of his royal presence, leaving him in possession of the garbage, while Johnny kept on caterwauling from his safety-perch.

What became of Grumpy the rest of that day I do not know. Johnny, after bewailing for a time, realized that there was no sympathetic hearer of his cries, and therefore very saga-

ciously stopped them. Having no mother now to plan for him, he began to plan for himself, and at once proved that he was better stuff than he seemed. After watching, with a look of profound cunning on his little black face, and waiting till the Grizzly was some distance away, he silently slipped down behind the trunk, and, despite his three-leggedness, ran like a hare to the next tree, never stopping to breathe till he was on its topmost bough. For he was thoroughly convinced that the only object that the Grizzly had in life was to kill him, and he seemed quite aware that his enemy could not climb a tree.

Another long and safe survey of the Grizzly, who really paid no heed to him whatever, was followed by another dash for the next tree, varied occasionally by a cunning feint to mislead the foe. So he went dashing from tree to tree and climbing each to its very top, although it might be but ten feet from the last, till he disappeared in the woods. After, perhaps, ten minutes, his voice again came floating on the breeze, the habitual querulous whining which told me he had found his mother and had resumed his customary appeal to her sympathy.

V

It is quite a common thing for Bears to spank their cubs when they need it, and if Grumpy had disciplined Johnny this way, it would have saved them both a deal of worry.

Perhaps not a day passed, that summer, without Grumpy getting into trouble on Johnny's account. But of all these numerous occasions the most ignominious was shortly after the affair with the Grizzly.

I first heard the story from three bronzed mountaineers. As they were very sensitive about having their word doubted, and very good shots with the revolver, I believed every word they told me, especially when afterward fully indorsed by the Park authorities.

It seemed that of all the tinned goods on the pile the nearest to Johnny's taste were marked with a large purple plum. This conclusion he had arrived at only after most exhaustive study. The very odor of those plums in Johnny's nostrils was the equivalent of ecstasy. So when it came about one day that the cook of the Hotel baked a huge batch of plum-tarts, the telltale wind took the story afar into the woods, where it was wafted by way of Johnny's nostrils to his very soul.

Of course Johnny was whimpering at the time. His mother was busy "washing his face and combing his hair," so he had double cause for whimpering. But the smell of the tarts thrilled him; he jumped up, and when his mother tried to hold him he squalled, and I am afraid—he bit her. She should have cuffed him, but she did not. She only gave a disapproving growl, and followed to see that he came to no harm.

With his little black nose in the wind, Johnny led straight for the kitchen. He took the precaution, however, of climbing from time to time to the very top of a pine-tree lookout to take an observation, while Grumpy stayed below.

Thus they came close to the kitchen, and there, in the last tree, Johnny's courage as a leader gave out, so he remained aloft and expressed his hankering for tarts in a woe-begone wail.

It is not likely that Grumpy knew exactly what her son was crying for. But it is sure that as soon as she showed an inclination to go back into the pines, Johnny protested in such an outrageous and heartrending screeching that his mother simply could not leave him, and he showed no sign of coming down to be led away

Grumpy herself was fond of plum-jam. The odor was now, of course, very strong and proportionately alluring; so Grumpy followed it somewhat cautiously up to the kitchen door.

There was nothing surprising about this. The rule of "live and let live" is so strictly enforced in the Park that the Bears often come to the kitchen door for pickings, and on getting something, they go quietly back to the woods. Doubtless Johnny and Grumpy would each have gotten their tart but that a new factor appeared in the case.

That week the Hotel people had brought a new Cat from the East. She was not much more than a kitten, but still had a litter of her own, and at the moment that Grumpy reached the door, the Cat and her family were sunning themselves on the top step. Pussy opened her eyes to see this huge, shaggy monster towering above her.

The Cat had never before seen a Bear—she had not been there long enough; she did not know even what a Bear was. She knew what a Dog was, and here was a bigger, more awful bobtailed black dog than ever she had dreamed of coming right at her. Her first thought was to fly for her life. But her next was for the kittens. She must take care of them. She

must at least cover their retreat. So, like a brave little mother, she braced herself on that door-step, and spreading her back, her claws, her tail, and everything she had to spread, she screamed out at that Bear an unmistakable order to

STOP!

The language must have been "Cat," but the meaning was clear to the Bear; for those who saw it maintain stoutly that Grumpy not only stopped, but she also conformed to the custom of the country and in token of surrender held up her hands.

However, the position she thus took made her so high that the Cat seemed tiny in the distance below. Old Grumpy had faced a Grizzly once, and was she now to be held up by a miserable little spike-tailed skunk no bigger than a mouthful? She was ashamed of herself, especially when a wail from Johnny smote on her ear and reminded her of her plain duty, as well as supplied his usual moral support.

So she dropped down on her front feet to proceed.

Again the Cat shrieked, "STOP!"

But Grumpy ignored the command. A scared mew from a kitten nerved the Cat, and she launched her ultimatum, which ultimatum

was herself. Eighteen sharp claws, a mouthful of keen teeth, had Pussy, and she worked all with a desperate will when she landed on Grumpy's bare, bald, sensitive nose, just the spot of all where the Bear could not stand it, and then worked backward to a point outside the sweep of Grumpy's claws. After one or two vain attempts to shake the spotted fury off, old Grumpy did just as most creatures would have done under the circumstances: she turned tail and bolted out of the enemy's country into her own woods.

But Puss's fighting blood was up. She was not content with repelling the enemy; she wanted to inflict a crushing defeat ; to achieve an absolute and final rout. And however fast old Grumpy might go, it did not count, for the Cat was still on top, working her teeth and claws like a little demon. Grumpy, always erratic, now became panic-stricken. The trail of the pair was flecked with tufts of long black hair, and there was even bloodshed (in the fiftieth degree). Honor surely was satisfied, but Pussy was not. Round and round they had gone in the mad race. Grumpy was frantic, absolutely humiliated, and ready to make any terms; but Pussy seemed deaf to her cough-like yelps, and no one knows how far the Cat might have

ridden that day had not Johnny unwittingly put a new idea into his mother's head by bawling in his best style from the top of his last tree, which tree Grumpy made for and scrambled up.

This was so clearly the enemy's country and in view of his reinforcements that the Cat wisely decided to follow no farther. She jumped from the climbing Bear to the ground, and then mounted sentry-guard below, marching around with tail in the air, daring that Bear to come down. Then the kittens came out and sat around, and enjoyed it all hugely. And the mountaineers assured me that the Bears would have been kept up the tree till they were starved, had not the cook of the Hotel come out and called off his Cat—although this statement was not among those vouched for by the officers of the Park.

VI

The last time I saw Johnny he was in the top of a tree, bewailing his unhappy lot as usual, while his mother was dashing about among the pines, "with a chip on her shoulder," seeking for some one—any one—that she could punish for Johnny's sake, provided, of course, that it was not a big Grizzly or a Mother Cat.

This was early in August, but there were not lacking symptoms of change in old Grumpy. She was always reckoned "onsartain," and her devotion to Johnny seemed subject to her characteristic. This perhaps accounted for the fact that when the end of the month was near, Johnny would sometimes spend half a day in the top of some tree, alone, miserable, and utterly unheeded.

The last chapter of his history came to pass after I had left the region. One day at gray dawn he was tagging along behind his mother as she prowled in the rear of the Hotel. A newly hired Irish girl was already astir in the kitchen. On looking out she saw, as she thought, a Calf where it should not be, and ran to shoo it away. That open kitchen door still held unmeasured terrors for Grumpy, and she ran in such alarm that Johnny caught the infection, and not being able to keep up with her, he made for the nearest tree, which unfortunately turned out to be a post, and soon—too soon—he arrived at its top, some seven feet from the ground, and there poured forth his woes on the chilly morning air, while Grumpy apparently felt justified in continuing her flight alone. When the girl came near and saw that she had treed some wild animal, she was

as much frightened as her victim. But others of the kitchen staff appeared, and recognizing the vociferous Johnny, they decided to make him a prisoner.

A collar and chain were brought, and after a struggle, during which several of the men got well scratched, the collar was buckled on Johnny's neck and the chain made fast to the post.

When he found that he was held, Johnny was simply too mad to scream. He bit and scratched and tore till he was tired out. Then he lifted up his voice again to call his mother. She did appear once or twice in the distance, but could not make up her mind to face that Cat, so disappeared, and Johnny was left to his fate.

He put in the most of that day in alternate struggling and crying. Toward evening he was worn out, and glad to accept the meal that was brought by Norah, who felt herself called on to play mother, since she had chased his own mother away.

When night came it was very cold; but Johnny nearly froze at the top of the post before he would come down and accept the warm bed provided at the bottom.

During the days that followed, Grumpy

came often to the garbage-heap, but soon apparently succeeded in forgetting all about her son. He was daily tended by Norah, and received all his meals from her. He also received something else; for one day he scratched her when she brought his food, and she very properly spanked him till he squealed. For a few hours he sulked; he was not used to such treatment. But hunger subdued him, and thenceforth he held his new guardian in wholesome respect. She, too, began to take an interest in the poor motherless little wretch, and within a fortnight Johnny showed signs of developing a new character. He was much less noisy. He still expressed his hunger in a whining *Er-r-r Er-r-r Er-r-r*, but he rarely squealed now, and his unruly outbursts entirely ceased.

By the third week of September the change was still more marked. Utterly abandoned by his own mother, all his interest had centred in Norah, and she had fed and spanked him into an exceedingly well-behaved little Bear. Sometimes she would allow him a taste of freedom, and he then showed his bias by making, not for the woods, but for the kitchen where she was, and following her around on his hind legs. Here also he made the acquaintance of that

dreadful Cat; but Johnny had a powerful friend now, and Pussy finally became reconciled to the black, woolly interloper.

As the Hotel was to be closed in October, there was talk of turning Johnny loose or of sending him to the Washington Zoo; but Norah had claims that she would not forego.

When the frosty nights of late September came, Johnny had greatly improved in his manners, but he had also developed a bad cough. An examination of his lame leg had shown that the weakness was not in the foot, but much more deeply seated, perhaps in the hip, and that meant a feeble and tottering constitution.

He did not get fat, as do most Bears in fall; indeed, he continued to fail. His little round belly shrank in, his cough became worse, and one morning he was found very sick and shivering in his bed by the post. Norah brought him indoors, where the warmth helped him so much that thenceforth he lived in the kitchen.

For a few days he seemed better, and his old-time pleasure in *seeing things* revived. The great blazing fire in the range particularly appealed to him, and made him sit up in his old attitude when the opening of the door brought the wonder to view. After a week he lost in-

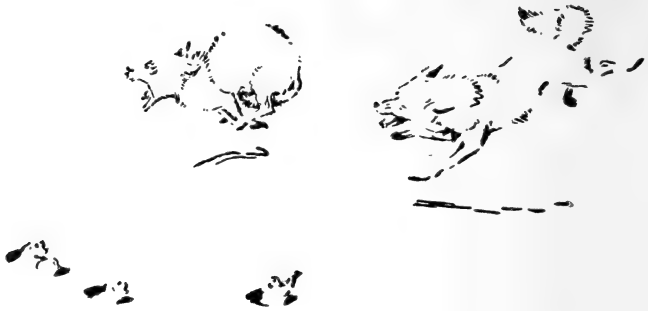
terest even in that, and drooped more and more each day. Finally not the most exciting noises or scenes around him could stir up his old fondness for seeing what was going on.

He coughed a good deal, too, and seemed wretched, except when in Norah's lap. Here he would cuddle up contentedly, and whine most miserably when she had to set him down again in his basket.

A few days before the closing of the Hotel, he refused his usual breakfast, and whined softly till Norah took him in her lap; then he feebly snuggled up to her, and his soft *Er-r-r Er-r-r* grew fainter, till it ceased. Half an hour later, when she laid him down to go about her work, Little Johnny had lost the last trace of his anxiety to see and know what was going on.

CHINK:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PUP



CHINK:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PUP

I

CHINK was just old enough to think himself a very remarkable little Dog; and so he was, but not in the way he fondly imagined. He was neither fierce nor dreadful, strong nor swift, but he was one of the noisiest, best-natured, silliest Pups that ever chewed his master's boots to bits. His master, Bill Aubrey, was an old mountaineer who was camped below Garnet Peak in the Yellowstone Park. This is in a very quiet corner, far from the usual line of travel, and Bill's camp, before ours came, would have been a very lonely place but for his companion, this irrepressible, woolly coated little Dog.

Chink was never still for five minutes. Indeed, he would do anything he was told to do except keep still. He was always trying to do some absurd and impossible thing, or, if he did attempt the possible, he usually spoiled his

best effort by his way of going about it. He once spent a whole morning trying to run up a tall, straight pine-tree in whose branches was a snickering Pine Squirrel.

The darling ambition of his life for some weeks was to catch one of the Picket-pin Gophers that swarmed on the prairie about the camp. These little animals have a trick of sitting bolt upright on their hind legs, with their paws held close in, so that at a distance they look exactly like picket-pins. Often when we went out to picket our horses for the night we would go toward a Gopher, thinking it was a picket-pin already driven in, and would find out the mistake only when it dived into the ground with a defiant chirrup.

Chink had determined to catch one of these Gophers the very first day he came into the valley. Of course he went about it in his own original way, doing everything wrong end first, as usual. This, his master said, was due to a streak of Irish in his make-up. So Chink would begin a most elaborate stalk a quarter of a mile from the Gopher. After crawling on his breast from tussock to tussock for a hundred yards or so, the nervous strain became too great, and Chink, getting too much excited to crawl, would rise on his feet and walk straight toward

the Gopher, which would now be sitting up by its hole, fully alive to the situation.

After a minute or two of this very open approach, Chink's excitement would overpower all caution. He would begin running, and at the last, just as he should have done his finest stalking, he would go bounding and barking toward the Gopher, which would sit like a peg of wood till the proper moment, then dive below with a derisive chirrup, throwing with its hind feet a lot of sand right into Chink's eager, open mouth.

Day after day this went on with level sameness, and still Chink did not give up. Perseverance, he seemed to believe, must surely win in the end, as indeed it did. For one day he made an unusually elaborate stalk after an unusually fine Gopher, carried out all his absurd tactics, finishing with the grand, boisterous charge, and actually caught his victim; but this time it happened to be a wooden picket-pin. Any one who doubts that a Dog knows when he has made a fool of himself should have seen Chink that day as he sheepishly sneaked out of sight behind the tent.

But failure had no lasting effect on Chink. There was a streak of grit as well as Irish in him that carried him through every reverse,

and nothing could dash his good-nature. He was into everything with the maximum of energy and the minimum of discretion, delighted as long as he could be always up and doing.

Every passing wagon and horseman and grazing Calf had to be chivvied, and if the Cat from the guard-house strayed by, Chink felt that it was a solemn duty he owed to the soldiers, the Cat, and himself to chase her home at frightful speed. He would dash twenty times a day after an old hat that Bill used deliberately to throw into a Wasps' nest with the order, "Fetch it!"

It took time, but countless disasters began to tell. Chink slowly realized that there were long whips and big, fierce Dogs with wagons; that Horses have teeth in their heels; that Calves have relatives with clubs on their heads; that a slow Cat may turn out a Skunk; and that Wasps are not Butterflies. Yes, it took an uncommonly long time, but it all told in the end. Chink began to develop a grain—a little one, but a living, growing grain—of good Dog sense.

II

It seemed as if all his blunders were the rough, unsymmetrical stones of an arch, and the keystone was added, the structure, his character, made strong and complete, by his crowning blunder in the matter of a large Coyote.

This Coyote lived not far from our camp, and he evidently realized, as all the animals there do, that no man is allowed to shoot, trap, hunt, or in any way molest the wild creatures in the Park; above all, in this part, close to the military patrol, with soldiers always on watch. Secure in the knowledge of this, the Coyote used to come about the camp each night for scraps. At first I found only his tracks in the dust, as though he had circled the camp but feared to come very near. Then we began to hear his weird evening song just after sundown, or about sun-up. At length his track was plain in the dust about the scrap-bucket each morning when I went out to learn from the trail what animals had been there during the night. Then growing bolder, he came about the camp occasionally in the daytime. Shyly at first, but with increasing assurance, as he was satisfied of his immunity, until finally he was not only there every night, but seemed to hang around

nearly all day, sneaking in to steal whatever was eatable, or sitting in plain view on some rising ground at a distance.

One morning, as he sat on a bank some fifty yards away, one of us, in a spirit of mischief, said to Chink: "Chink, do you see that Coyote over there grinning at you? Go and chase him out of that."

Chink always did as he was told, and burning to distinguish himself, he dashed after the Coyote, who loped lightly away, and there was a pretty good race for a quarter of a mile; but it was nothing to the race which began when the Coyote turned on his pursuer.

Chink realized all at once that he had been lured into the power of a Tartar, and strained every muscle to get back to camp. The Coyote was swifter, and soon overtook the Dog, nipping him first on one side, then on the other, with manifest glee, as if he were cracking a series of good jokes at Chink's expense.

Chink yelped and howled and ran his hardest, but had no respite from his tormentor till he dashed right into camp; and we, I am afraid, laughed with the Coyote, and the Puppy did not get the sympathy he deserved for his trouble in doing as he was told.

One more experience like this, on a smaller

scale was enough to dampen even Chink's enthusiasm. He decided to let that Coyote very much alone in future.

Not so the Coyote, however. He had discovered a new and delightful amusement. He came daily now and hung about the camp, knowing perfectly well that no one would dare to shoot him. Indeed, the lock of every gun in the party was sealed up by the government officials, and soldiers were everywhere on watch to enforce the laws.

Thenceforth that Coyote lay in wait for poor Chink, and sought every opportunity to tease him. The little Dog learned that if he went a hundred yards from camp alone, the Coyote would go after him, and bite and chase him right back to his master's tent.

Day after day this went on, until at last Chink's life was made a misery to him. He did not dare now to go fifty yards from the tent alone; and even if he went with us when we rode, that fierce and impudent Coyote was sure to turn up and come along, trotting close beside or behind, watching for a chance to worry poor Chink and spoiling all his pleasure in the ramble, but keeping just out of reach of our quirts, or a little farther off when we stopped to pick up some stones.

One day Aubrey moved his camp a mile up-stream, and we saw less of the Coyote, for the reason that he moved a mile up-stream too, and, like all bullies who are unopposed, grew more insolent and tyrannical every day, until poor little Chink's life became at last a veritable reign of terror, at which his master merely laughed.

Aubrey gave it out that he had moved camp to get better Horse-feed. It soon turned out, however, that he wanted to be alone while he enjoyed the contents of a whiskey-flask that he had obtained somewhere. But one flask was a mere starter for him. The second day he mounted his Horse, said, "Chink, you watch the tent," and rode away over the mountains to the nearest saloon, leaving Chink obediently curled up on some sacking.

III

Now, with all his puppyish silliness, Chink was a faithful watch-dog, and his master knew that he would take care of the tent as well as he could.

Late that afternoon a passing mountaineer came along. When he was within shouting

distance he stopped, as is customary, and shouted:

"Hello there, Bill! Oh, Bill!"

But getting no answer, he went up to the door, and there was met by "an odd-looking Purp with his bristles all on end;" and Chink, for of course it was he, warned him in many fierce growls to keep away.

The mountaineer understood the situation and went on. Evening came, and no master to relieve Chink, who was now getting very hungry.

There was some bacon in the tent wrapped in a bag, but that was sacred. His master had told him to "watch it," and Chink would have starved rather than touch it.

He ventured out on the flat in hope of finding a mouse or something to stay the pangs of hunger, when suddenly he was pounced on by that brute of a Coyote, and the old chase was repeated as Chink dashed back to the tent.

There a change came over him. The remembrance of his duty seemed suddenly to alter him and brace him up, just as the cry of her Kitten will turn a timid Cat into a Tigress.

He was a mere Puppy yet, and a little fool in many ways, but away back of all was a fibre

of strength that would grow with his years. The moment that Coyote tried to follow into the tent,— his master's tent,— Chink forgot all his own fears, and turned on the enemy like a little demon.

The beasts feel the force of right and wrong. They know moral courage and cowardice. The moral force was all with the little scared Dog, and both animals seemed to know it. The Coyote backed off, growling savagely, and vowing, in Coyote fashion, to tear that Dog to ribbons very soon. All the same, he did not venture to enter the tent, as he clearly had intended doing.

Then began a literal siege; for the Coyote came back every little while, and walked round the tent, scratching contemptuously with his hind feet, or marching up to the open door, to be met at once, face to face, by poor little Chink, who, really half dead with fear, was brave again as soon as he saw any attempt to injure the things in his charge.

All this time Chink had nothing to eat. He could slip out and get a drink at the near-by stream once or twice a day, but he could not get a meal in that way. He could have torn a hole in the sack and eaten some bacon, but he would not, for that was in trust; or he could

have watched his chance to desert his post, and sneaked off to our camp, where he would have been sure of a good meal. But no; adversity had developed the true Dog in him. He would not betray his master's trust in any way. He was ready to die at his post, if need be, while that master was away indulging in a drunken carouse.

For four days and four nights of misery did this heroic little Dog keep his place, and keep tent and stuff from the Coyote that he held in mortal terror.

On the fifth morning old Aubrey had awakened to the fact that he was not at home, and that his camp in the mountains was guarded only by a small Dog. He was tired of his spree now, and he got on his Horse and set out over the hills, sober but very shaky. When he was about half-way on the trail it suddenly dawned on his clouded brain that he had left Chink without any food.

"Hope the little beast hain't spoiled all my bacon," he thought, and he pressed on more briskly till he came to the ridge commanding a view of his tent. There it was, and there at the door, exchanging growls and snapping at each other, were the big, fierce Coyote and poor little Chink.

"Wal, I be darned!" exclaimed Aubrey. "I forgot all about that blasted Coyote. Poor Chink! he must 'a' had a mighty tough time. Wonder he ain't all chawed up an' the camp in tatters."

There he was, bravely making his last stand. His legs were tottering under him with fear and hunger, but he still put on his boldest face, and was clearly as ready as ever to die in defence of the camp.

The cold gray eyes of the mountaineer took in this part of the situation at the first glance, and when he galloped up and saw the untouched bacon, he realized that Chink had eaten nothing since he left. When the Puppy, trembling with fear and weakness, crawled up and looked in his face and licked his hand as much as to say, "I've done what you told me," it was too much for old Aubrey. The tears stood in his eyes as he hastened to get food for the little hero.

Then he turned to him and said: "Chink, old pard, I've treated you dirty, an' you always treated me white. I'll never go on another spree without takin' you along, Chink, an' I'll treat you as white as you treated me, if I know how. 'Tain't much more I kin do for you, pard, since ye don't drink, but I reckon I kin

Trembling with Fear and Weakness, He was
Making his Last Stand.

lift the biggest worry out o' yer life, an' I'll do it, too."

Then from the ridge-pole he took down the pride of his heart, his treasured repeating rifle, and, regardless of consequences, he broke the government seals, wax eagles, red tape, and all and went to the door.

The Coyote was sitting off a little way with a Mephistophelian grin on his face, as usual; but the rifle rang, and Chink's reign of terror was at an end.

What matter if the soldiers did come out and find that the laws of the Park had been violated, that Aubrey had shot one of the animals of the Park?

What matter to Aubrey if his gun was taken from him and destroyed, and he and his outfit expelled from the Park, with a promise of being jailed if ever he returned? What did it all matter?

"It's all right," said old Aubrey. "I done the sqar' thing by my pard—my pard, that always treated me white."

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